AFRICAN WOMEN IN REVOLUTION

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W.O. MALOBA

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PREFACE

The "woman question" remains a complex and controversial subject in scholarship. This is especially true in African Studies and also in the study of revolutions and revolutionary movements. Revolutionaries as diverse as V. I. Lenin, Alexandra Kollontai, Rosa Luxemburg, Ho Chi Minh, Fidel Castro, Amilcar Cabral, Samora Machel, Robert Mugabe, etc. have all reflected on this question and come to similar, although still varied, conclusions. This book takes up this enduring and challenging question.

At its center, this book is a pioneering broad interpretive work. It offers a detailed multidisciplinary analysis of the roles played by African women in seven revolutionary movements (and countries) in post-World War II Africa. The revolutionary movements covered in this book occurred in: Algeria, Kenya, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Angola, Zimbabwe, and South Africa.

Beyond describing and analyzing the nature and impact of women's participation in these revolutionary movements, I also raise these interrelated questions: How did each of these revolutionary movements define women's liberation? What is the linkage between feminist theories of liberation and national liberation? Did the national liberation movements betray women? And lastly, what has been the fate of the original commitments (and impulses) toward women's liberation and gender equality? All of these questions and issues pertaining to women in African revolutionary movements can now be studied, analyzed, and compated with one another "under one roof." By considering seven revolutionary movements in one book, opportunities are provided for both direct and indirect comparison.

One of the inescapable conclusions that I arrived at in the course of writing this book is that the status of women in the post-revolutionary period is a window through which we can observe the complex local and international factors that have affected the reconstruction of these societies. Through this window we can study, and appreciate, the multiple obstacles and challenges to women's liberation, and also isolate the determinant factors in the formulation of national economic and social policies.

Then, there is imperialism. This book hopes to make a contribution, however modest, toward the revitalization of the study and analysis of imperialism in its several manifestations in colonial and postcolonial Africa. On this question I have followed the lead of Prabhat Patnaik, a professor of economics at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India. In his seminal article "What Happened to Imperialism?" published in the *Monthly Review* magazine in 1990, he observed that "in the Marxist discourse in the United States over the last decade, hardly anybody" talked "about imperialism anymore."[1] This development was particularly troubling since "imperialism, viewed as a fundamental set of economic relations characterizing the world is also stronger today than ever before, at least in the post-war period."[2]

The study and analysis of the multiple manifestations of imperialism is vitally relevant to any thoughtful and factual endeavor aimed at comprehending the fate of third world revolutions in general and of African revolutions in particular.

What is now strikingly quite evident, as Prabhat Patnaik reminds us, is that "The emancipation of the Third World, as almost everybody, whether in the first or the Third World, now realizes, resembles an obstacle race where the horse must fall at one of the obstacles."[3]

In what ways are third world revolutions sabotaged? How are the revolutionary accomplishments reversed? The process, as it happens, is now almost standardized. "First the coming to power of a revolutionary government is itself blocked in several

ways: if per chance it does come to power, an economic blockade is imposed upon it; the disaffection generated by social reforms and economic hardships, which are inevitable, is then utilized to foment a civil war; even if the government succeeds in winning the civil war, unable to rebuild its shattered economy with the meager resources at its command, it must go abroad for loans, at which point agencies like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank come in, demanding a reversal of the reforms."[4]

Imposed economic and social policies by Western financial (and political) institutions have had the net effect of "overthrowing" these revolutions. In such circumstances, it has been difficult, if not impossible to realize the revolutionary objective that "equality is both a goal and a means whereby individuals are accorded equal treatment under the law and equal opportunities to enjoy their rights and to develop their potential talents and skills...."[5] A majority of these countries have therefore been denied the economic (and social) resources needed to translate legal and ideological pronouncements regarding equality into verifiable and sustainable opportunities.

Hence, there is an organic linkage between the grinding poverty of many of these countries and the plight of women within them. "The inequality of women in most countries," the UNO has pointed out, "stems to a very large extent from mass poverty and the general backwardness of the majority of the world's population caused by underdevelopment, which is a product of imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, apartheid, racism, racial discrimination and unjust international economic relations."[6]

How about the future? One of the pressing questions remains the meaning of decolonization and the status of women in the new states. The painful political paradox of postcolonial Africa, as is true of most of the third world, is that "A country may be both post-colonial (in the sense of being formally independent) and neo-colonial (in the sense of remaining economically and/or culturally dependent) at the same time."[7] Neocolonialism, the

"new global order," and other variants of economic, social, and political domination, constitute what Ellen Meiksins Wood has called the "Empire of Capital." This empire, capitalist and worldwide, "is the first imperialism in history that does not depend simply on capturing this or that bit of territory, or dominating this or that subject people."[8] Rather, it is dependent on overseeing "the whole global system of states" in order to "ensure that imperial capital can safely and profitably navigate throughout that global system."[9]

Locally, the neocolonial state reinforces and supervises the objectives of the "Empire of Capital"; it avoids and vigorously denounces and derides any social and economic policies aimed at promoting social and gender equality. Not surprisingly, the "newly independent nation-state makes available the fruits of liberation only selectively and unevenly." In this way, the neocolonial state is unable to "bring about changes for the better in the status of women, the working class or the peasantry."[10] These groups, together with the unemployed, the destitute, and the landless peasants, subsist in what is essentially a colonial relationship with the ruling political and business elite. There is, here, what amounts to "internal colonialism"; therefore, "'colonialism' is not just something that happens from outside a country or a people, not just something that operates with collusion of forces inside, but a version of it can be duplicated from within."[11] This phenomenon has drastic implications on the quest for liberation. Can social equality, justice, national progress, and women's liberation be achieved without launching yet another phase of African liberation, this time aimed at dislodging neocolonialism, "internal colonialism," and "Empire of Capital?"

The future also involves continuing the discussions on the nature of African feminism and the roles that African women, and Africans in general, should play in defining it and cultivating its growth. In an insightful introduction to *Sisterhood: Feminisms and Power from Africa to the Diaspora*, Obioma Nnaemeka noted that a "major flaw of feminist attempts to tame and name

the feminist spirit in Africa is their failure to define African feminism on its own terms rather than in the context of Western feminism."[12] African feminism, she pointed out, resists both "the exclusion of men from women's issues" and "the universalization of Western notions and concepts."[13] The two feminisms, African and Western, also differ in the matter of "language of engagement." Whereas, "African feminism challenges through negotiation and compromise," Western feminism is more strident and combative.[14] It is, hence, not surprising that African feminism resists radical feminism in general, and especially its "stridency against motherhood." African feminism is also quite resistant "to Western feminism's inordinate and unrelenting emphasis on sexuality, which conditions, for example, the nature, tone, spectacle and overall *modus operandi* of Western feminist insurgency against female circumcision in Africa and the Arab World."[15]

It is then quite apparent that there are very limited areas of convergence between Western feminism and African feminism. And so, "due to different worldviews, cultural imperatives, and priorities between the West and Africa, feminism in Africa and feminism in the West have followed and will follow different paths."[16]

Equally relevant here is Western domination in scholarship on women in Africa, especially in the theoretical paradigms, formulations, assumptions, and emphasis employed in the analysis of the African woman's experience. This domination, "deliberately and consciously" endorsed by Western donors, ensures that local scholars in Africa "remain primary producers of raw data to be processed by 'intellectual' factories of the North."[17] This relationship, which parallels the dominant "unjust international economic relations" between Africa and the West, routinely "perpetuates the exploitation of intellectual labour of feminists in the South by the North."[18] Another unfortunate byproduct of this exploitative linkage is the creation of "a rather artificial dependency relationship of the South on the North for published material on gender."[19]

Western domination in the provision of scholarships and fellowships for study, together with control over the major publication outlets, has had a decisive influence on the nature of the scholarship on the "woman question" in African Studies in general. This reality has influenced the variety of questions asked in scholarly research and even on how those questions are asked. Lastly, this domination has also unmistakably affected which publications are celebrated and hailed.

The practice of racial or economic domination affecting the nature of scholarly output is not limited only to the study of Africa. In the USA, where racism remains a constant and powerful factor, Trina Grillo and Stephanie M. Wildman have pointed out that "White supremacy creates in whites the expectation that issues of concern to them will be central in any discourse."[20] This is clearly evident in scholarship and even in politics; "many whites think that people of color are obsessed with race and find it hard to understand the emotional and intellectual energy the people of color devote to the subject."[21]

There is also the intellectual strategy of comparing and equating oppressions. Quite often this strategy ends up "obscuring the importance of race." In the USA, "comparing other oppressions to racial oppression gives whites a false sense that they fully understand the experiences of people of color."[22]

Any serious discussion about the current and future struggles for women's liberation in Africa must confront the slippery, and often vexing, tension between political activism and scholarship. There is tension between those who "need to understand causes because they" want to "understand how to change the world" and "those to whom history is an abstract search for knowledge."[23] This tension can also be observed in a "disturbing trend in the social sciences away from explanation or analysis of events and institutions toward mere description."[24]

A similar tension continues to exist in Women's Studies in the USA. At the height of women's struggles for liberation in the 1960s

and 1970s, there was a valuable and mutually profitable interplay between theory and practice. During this period, "feminist theory provided the energy, vision, and rationale for the feminist politics and was, in turn, deepened, elaborated, and sometimes complicated by the new scholarship on women."[25] Although "never a monolith," there was nonetheless a premium placed on the concept of "theorizing from experience," which proposed "that there is no firm separation to be drawn between woman as member of society and woman as thinker, theorist or activist."[26]

In the post-1980s period, when postmodernism became the new "dominant theoretical paradigm," there developed delinkage between theory and practice. The formulation of theory within universities and colleges subsequently tended to proceed without any significant input by the material world outside these institutions. The academic feminists that have produced these theoretical paradigms have not necessarily sought for a meaningful dialogue with "the women outside the academy" who "continue to engage in political struggle (whilst rejecting any definition of themselves as 'feminist')."[27]

The pursuit of detached, especially of descriptive scholarship on the "woman question," however "nuanced and intellectually sophisticated," has definite political objectives. "There is a politics," Linda Gordon observed, "behind this tendency to shy away from explanation."[28] What does the claim to political neutrality imply in the study of the multifaceted question of women's liberation in Africa? While it is true that "there are dangers in being partisan scholars ... there are worse dangers in posing as objective. The first is that since no one can achieve real political neutrality, those who claim it are misleading people. In the academic world, we still need to repeat that those who accept traditional academic assumptions are in fact as political as those who reject them.... To claim neutrality is to surrender any critical distance on one's culture, to accept as permanent and neutral traditions which are in fact disintegrating."[29]

It follows that those seeking fundamental social changes and women's liberation must, as a starting point, see the economic, political, and social connections between the local and the global. Specifically, in the age of "Empire of Capital," they must reckon that "local issues have world-wide causes and consequences."[30]

This book provides many demonstrations of linkages between the local and the global in the analysis of the status of women in the postrevolutionary period. Consequently, this analysis sees little or no conceptual value in what Angela P. Harris has called "gender essentialism." The essence of "gender essentialism" is to identify and "describe the notion that there is a monolithic 'women's experience' that can be described independently of other facets of experience like race, class and sexual orientation."[31] Although this phenomenon "carries with it important emotional and political payoffs," it cannot be used as a guide to understanding the women's experience in the postrevolutionary period.

Organizationally, this book comprises four chapters plus an exhaustive introduction. The course of each revolutionary movement, and especially its attempts at women's liberation, is discussed against the backdrop of the inherited institutions and material conditions. Quite often what the revolutionary movements inherited affected both the subsequent texture of their revolutions and the status of women.

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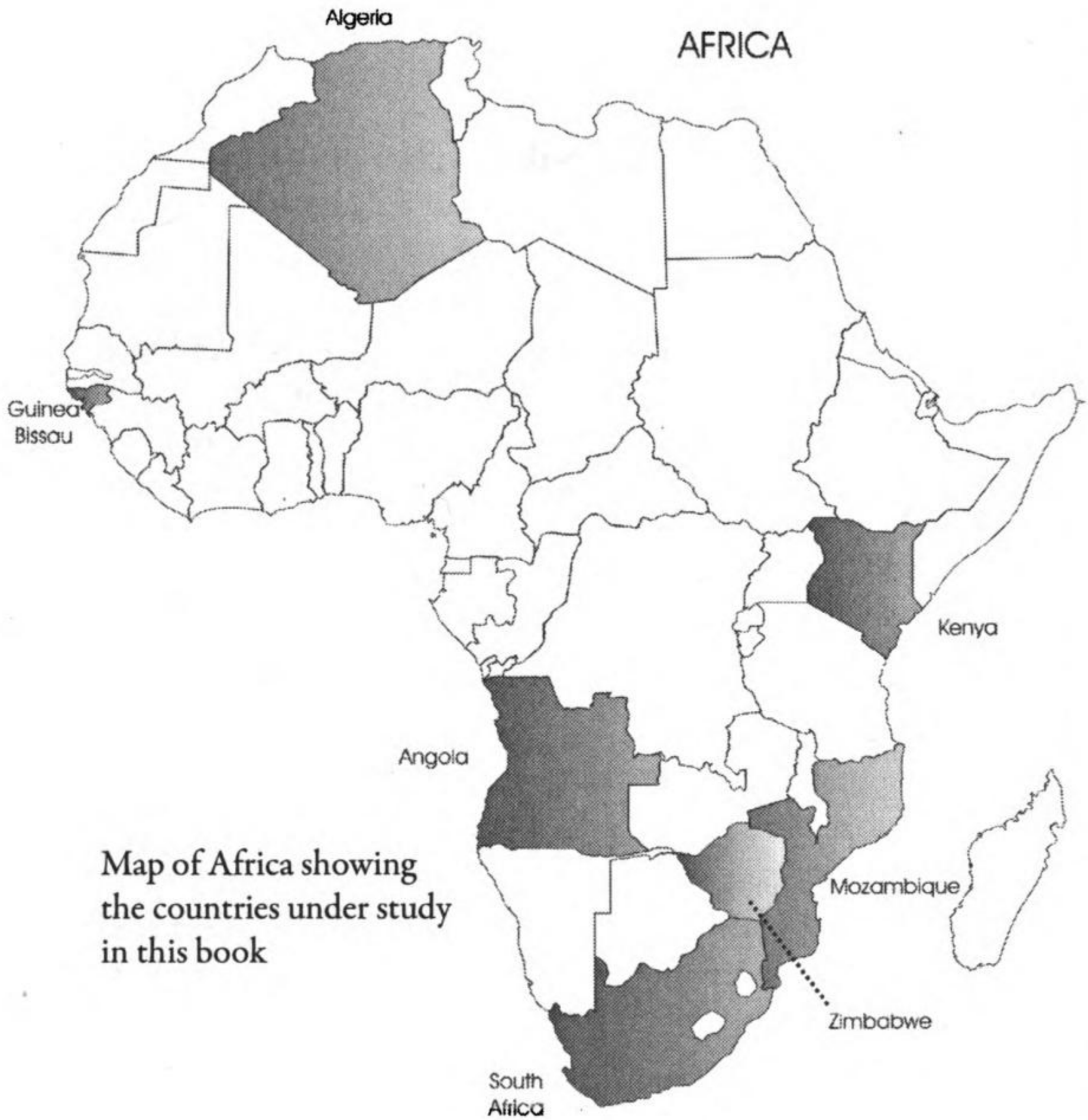
Many of the issues and concepts discussed in this book have, over the last ten years, been covered in my seminar course, "Women and Revolution in Africa." Comments, criticisms, and observations by my many students have always been frank, informed, and passionate. I have benefited immensely from the energetic discussions in this seminar. Additionally, my students have annually renewed my faith in the youth as the torchbearers of positive change.

Lastly, I would like to thank Gail Brittingham for typing the bulk of the manuscript for this book.



Map of Africa showing the countries under study in this book

ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress
ANCWL	African National Congress-Women's League
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment
FIS	Front of Islamic Salvation
FLN	National Liberation Front
FNLA	National Front for the Liberation of Angola
FRELIMO	Mozambique Liberation Front
FSAW	Federation of South African Women
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KADU	Kenya African Democratic Union
KANU	Kenya African National Union
KAU	Kenya African Union
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
MNR	Mozambique National Resistance
MPLA	Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola
OMA	Organization of Angolan Women
OMM	Organization of Mozambican Women
PAC	Pan African Congress
PAIGC	African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SAP	Structural Adjustment Program

UDEMU	Democratic Union of the Women of Guinea-Bissau
UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
WB	World Bank
WTO	World Trade Organization
ZANLA	Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union
ZANU/PF	Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union
ZIPRA	Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army

INTRODUCTION

ROLES IN THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS

The interrelationship between feminism and revolution remains one of the most complex and multifaceted aspect in the study and analysis of any revolutionary movement. The persistent historical questions raised by this interrelationship point to the inescapable value of reevaluating both the theories of revolution guiding the revolutionary movement and the operative definitions of feminism. Also introduced by this enduringly complex interrelationship are the uncomfortable questions of how the revolution is viewed by, and related to, its various constituencies. Do these constituencies share a similar vision of the future postrevolutionary society, or are there in fact multivisions that are agonizingly contradictory? If contradictions exist, can they be resolved through the revolutionary process under the steady guidance of the national revolutionary party? These issues relate directly to the revolutionary movements covered in this study; those that occurred in Algeria, Kenya, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Angola, Zimbabwe, and South Africa.

All of these revolutionary movements relied, to varying degrees, on women for crucial support. Women emerged as the indispensable component of the revolutionary movements for national liberation in post—World War II Africa. This development emphatically contradicted the Western image of the African woman as passive, ignorant, and helpless. This unflattering image of the African woman is the cumulative byproduct of travelogues by European explorers, dispatches and reflections by missionaries, official colonial reports, "scholarship" by colonial

administrators and other authorities on colonial rule, writings by anthropologists during colonial rule, some of the post—World War II scholarly writings, critiques and observations by many feminists, and finally the portrayal of them in the mass media.

The African woman has consistently been portrayed as "the property" of the African man. Indeed, quite often the "ownership of women" has been identified as one of the key objectives of the African man. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Sir Charles Eliot, newly appointed governor of Kenya, noted that although "The African does not care to be rich," he still takes great effort to "accumulate wives and cattle." In almost "every tribe," Sir Charles observed, "a man owns a number of women and children and that is all."[1]

These women, victims of "unrelenting misery," were overworked, oppressed, and obedient to men. They were portrayed as lacking in beauty and dignity. Dr. David Livingstone, the nineteenth-century British missionary and explorer to central Africa, found African women "by nature, not particularly good looking." They seemed "to take all the pains they can to make themselves worse."[2] He observed such futile efforts by "the people of one tribe," who "knock out all their upper front teeth, and when they laugh are perfectly hideous."[3] In contrast, he found European women beautiful. Speaking at Cambridge University in December 1857, Dr. Livingstone pointed out to his attentive audience "how pleasant it is to see the blooming cheeks of young ladies before me, after an absence of sixteen years from such delightful objects of contemplation."[4]

After World War II, long after the time of Livingstone in Africa, Negley Farson, a colonial journalist, visited Kenya to "make a study of its problems." He took a special interest in describing the characteristics of the "native tribes" that he encountered. His observations about African women, in particular the Kikuyu women of central Kenya, came close to equating them with animals. "The Kikuyu woman's skull is long and flat, with an indentation across it from a head strap that begins to form at the

age of six and deepens as life goes on until she is a bent, withered old hag at fifty. They are," Negley Farson continued, "the most ill used beasts of burden in all Africa, not excepting the transport animals."[5] On one occasion he went to the local market and again was struck by their ugliness. "These women," he noted, "sit in sullen clusters in the market places, legs stretched on the ground, wares at the feet; and, it seems, an unappeasable cold rancour lies behind their work-distorted faces, with their flat dugs, and perforated dangling ear-flaps filled with the mocking finery of wire-strung pink-beads."[6] His conclusion was that when "their inimical stare meets your eyes," you feel that "you are really looking into the face of Darkest Africa. I think you are. It lies in the Soul."[7]

These images, persistent and continually reinforced by new waves of scholarship, are not yet dead. They are woven in intricate ways into modern Western scholarship about Africa and its women, and also in portrayals in the mass media—including the entertainment industry. It is, therefore, not surprising that an increasing number of African feminists are very critical of these colonial-age images of African women. These criticisms center on continued Western domination in scholarship about Africa, especially on African women. Such domination forces Africans, including African women, to "know themselves" through Western interpretations, reflections, and deductions.[8]

There is a perceived imposition by Western feminists of theoretical concepts and values concerning women's oppression and exploitation on the life and experiences of African women. The conclusions drawn from such studies, without genuine African perspectives and participation in the production of definitions and categories, are, therefore, seen as mistaken, even ill-informed. "Oppressed groups," Patricia Hill Collins correctly observed, "are frequently placed in the situation of being listened to only if we frame our ideas in the language that is familiar to and comfortable for a dominant group. This requirement often changes the meaning of our ideas and works to elevate the ideas of dominant groups."[9]

On the specific question of analyzing African women's oppression and exploitation, African feminists have been quick to draw attention to the limitations of Western feminists analyses and theory, i.e., limitations of theory over matter. That overapplication of Western feminists insights, without due relevant modification, often distorts rather than clarifies the experiences being analyzed. "European authors," Christine Qunta writes, "tend to employ theoretical assumptions and a methodology which hamper or in some cases preclude a realistic assessment of the subject matter."[10]

This is particularly true in the representation of the rural African woman in scholarship and in mass media outlets. For example, since she is likely to be illiterate and poor, especially under the current regime of globalization, she is consequently unable to write and articulate her experiences in her own words. As evidence of her powerlessness, she is unable to determine how she is represented in scholarship. Quite often, she tends to be described and analyzed by those who may not necessarily understand the full dynamics of her life and existence. Thus, the rural woman "is portrayed as little more than a slave who goes about her tasks with silent acceptance. She has no past and no future, given the inherent backwardness of her society. Her consciousness about her oppression is awakened only when she comes into contact with Western women and she is surprised by their comparative freedom. She never speaks for herself but is always spoken about."[11]

The Western mass media have, in their coverage of Africa, reinforced these preexisting images of African women. Aided by technological advances, the mass media have transmitted and disseminated these images to a larger audience (nationally and internationally) than was ever possible during the era of books and newspapers. "The image of the African woman in the mind of the world," Ama Ata Aidoo stated at an international African women's conference in Nigeria, "has been set: she is breeding too many children she cannot take care of, and for whom she should not expect other people to pick up the tab. She is hungry, and so are her children. In fact it has become a cliché of Western

photojournalism," she continued, "that the African woman is old beyond her years; she is half naked; her drooped and withered breasts are well exposed; there are flies buzzing around the faces of her children; and she has a permanent begging bowl in her hand."[12] Yet it is mostly these rural women, portrayed as passive and often illiterate, who provided the crucial support for the revolutionary movements of national liberation in Africa.

The questions raised by studying the roles played by women in national revolutionary movements are critical in illuminating the status of women in African societies under colonialism. On this issue, a basic error would be to assume that the characteristics of the African societies observed under colonialism in essence constituted "the traditional African societies." African tradition, as it happens, was "invented" under colonialism. What does the concept of invented tradition mean? "Invented tradition," Eric Hobsbawm has clarified, "is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact where possible," he continues, "they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past."[13] It is the supposed linkage to the "historic past" that is repeatedly invoked in order to bestow legitimacy on the invented tradition. But "the peculiarity of 'invented' traditions is that the continuity" with the "historic past ... is largely fictitious."[14]

In Africa the invention of tradition, as pointed out by Terence Ranger, sought to achieve two interlocking objectives. First, European rulers, especially "the settlers, had to define themselves as natural and undisputed masters of vast numbers of Africans."[15] Second, the invented tradition had also "to provide models of subservience into which it was sometimes possible to draw Africans."[16] Europeans were eager to safeguard their image in Africa; as the undisputed lords and masters of Africans. In order to realize this deeply-held objective, the relationship between Europeans and Africans had to reflect this reality. "European invented traditions," Terence Ranger

writes, "offered Africans a series of clearly defined points of entry into the colonial world, though almost in all cases it was entry into the subordinate part of a man/master relationship."[17]

The observable outcome of European invention of African tradition was rigidity and "clearly defined hierarchical status." Europeans "set about to codify and promulgate these traditions, thereby transforming flexible custom into hard prescription."[18] This promulgation and the colonial policies that arose out of it "misunderstood the realities of precolonial Africa." Colonial rulers and their multiple advisers were eager to impose rigidity of status and social hierarchies where none existed. Ranger argues convincingly that status, hierarchy, and even identity in precolonial African societies tended to be much more flexible categories than the invented tradition later specified. Thus, "the 19th century Africa was not characterized by lack of internal social and economic competition, by the unchallenged authority of the elders, by an acceptance of custom which gave every person—young and old, male and female—a place in society which was defined and protected."[19] This rigidity of status imposed on the African tradition reflected the realities of the culture of the colonial system in which the role and status of Africans were well established and rigidly enforced. Africans were servants. To be sure, service to the colonial system was rendered through a multiplicity of occupations.

European invention of African tradition had a decisive and long-lasting impact on the status of women in colonial (and postcolonial) African societies. There was "a conscious determination on the part of the colonial authorities to 'reestablish' order and security and a sense of community by means of defining and enforcing 'tradition.'"[20] In almost every case, these efforts toward the definition of tradition led to the systematic demotion in the status of women which, in turn, seriously limited their opportunities for social advancement. What facilitated this outcome? To a large degree this was due to the fact that the "colonial records of African 'tradition' on which the new invented custom was based, were exclusively derived from male informants, so that 'indig-

enous female belief' remained unrecorded. Thus, 'men's dominance in society, that is their control over religious beliefs and political organization' was expressed even more clearly in colonial invented custom than it had ever been before. Moreover, African men were quite prepared to appeal to the colonial authority to enforce 'custom' upon women once it had been defined."[21]

The veracity of the "invention of tradition" has recently been questioned by Thomas Spear in his article, "Neo-Traditionalism and the Limits of Invention in British Colonial Africa," which appeared in *Journal of African History* in 2003. Thomas Spear concluded that it made "little sense to talk about 'invention' in any meaningful sense of the word. Rather," he continued, "older traditions were continually reinterpreted, customs were endlessly debated and ethnic boundaries became more or less opposed or permeable."[22] Further, appointed colonial chiefs were not "immune to local influence or limits." Thomas Spear makes repeated reference to the Africans' active participation in the reinterpretation of tradition, "in the context of the present." This is the concept of the agency of Africans during colonial rule. As he sees it, such "agency must be seen as a function of discourse as people debate issues of the present in terms of ideas and beliefs drawn from the past, reformulating them and revising them in the context of the present."[23]

As an elaborate theoretical and provocative construct, Thomas Spear's article is indeed interesting, even fascinating. It does not, however, advance in any appreciable way our understanding of the cruelty and inhumanity of the colonial system. Nor does it succeed in radically revising Terence Ranger's original formulation on the "invention of tradition." At issue is the fact that Africans were a dominated people, having lost their sovereignty. This significant fact, often overlooked, ensured that "negotiations and compromises" over tradition between Africans and Europeans were between the oppressor and the oppressed. This was not a discussion among equals. Thus, not all ideas were discussed or debated; many ideas pertaining to the dignity and integrity of the

Africans were declared irrelevant, often dangerous. "The colonial administrators and their allies, the European missionaries," A. Adu Boahen pointed out, "condemned everything African in culture—African names, music, dance, art, religion, marriage, the system of inheritance—and completely discouraged the teaching of all these things in their schools and colleges. Even the wearing of African clothes to work or school was banned. All this could not but retard the cultural development of the continent."[24] It is also clear, as several colonial studies have ably demonstrated, that colonialism encouraged and fostered ethnic divisions and particularism, even animosity.[25] Such policies made the boundaries among ethnic groups far less porous.

Throughout the colonial rule, the colonizers remained keenly aware of the fact that their rule was never legitimate. They remained oppressive foreign occupiers. "A foreigner having come to a land by the accidents of history," Albert Memmi wrote of the colonizer, "he has succeeded not merely in creating a place for himself but also in taking away that of the inhabitant, granting himself astounding privileges to the detriment of those rightfully entitled to them. And this not only by virtue of local laws, which in a certain way legitimize this inequality by tradition, but by upsetting the established rules and substituting his own. He thus appears doubly unjust. He is a privileged being and an illegitimately privileged one; that is, a usurper."[26]

What was evident, as Terence Ranger pointed out, is that the colonial system was executed through the invented traditions. These traditions, "whether invented by the Europeans or by Africans themselves in response," not only "distorted the past but became in themselves realities through which a good deal of the colonial encounter was expressed."[27]

In its operation, as already stated, colonialism failed to advance the welfare of African women. "On one issue," Jeanne K. Henn wrote emphatically, "all researchers agree: during the colonial period, African women's workload increased, in many cases significantly."[28] This increase in the workload plus restricted

access to land, alongside very limited opportunities for education led to an unfortunate "downgrading of the status of women in Africa." Lack of educational qualifications prevented African women from gaining entry "into the professions—medicine, law, the civil service and the bench. The colonial period," A. Adu Boahen concluded, "was definitely a man's world, and women were not allowed to play any meaningful role in it except as petty traders and farmers."[29]

Unlike the precolonial period, where "in many parts of Africa, women who farmed had rights over land," under colonialism the imposition of private ownership of land left most women without "their customary rights" to land.[30] The introduction of cash crop farming profoundly changed the nature and value of sexual division of labor. Male control over cash crop farming changed what had been a parallel division of labor in households to a hierarchical one; in which men sought to control both the employment of women's labor and the proceeds of cash-crop cultivated. This hierarchical division of household labor, did not represent "the realities of traditional Africa." Indeed, there was a marked increase in sharp class differences in African societies prompted by the particular brand of capitalism introduced in Africa under the protection and guidance of colonialism. In Kenya, for example, the *Ahoi* (landless peasants), in Kikuyuland of central Kenya found that introduction of cash-crop farming had nullified their traditional access to land. They were quickly being turned into exploited laborers on farms owned by newly-emerging Kikuyu landed gentry.[31]

In education, women were initially excluded from even the most rudimentary schooling. "When education was first introduced, it was initially for boys only. This was the case with higher education and jobs in government and business."[32] Colonialism, therefore, deliberately excluded women from competing on equal terms with men in the acquisition of literacy and technical skills, however limited these were in colonial Africa. When eventually schooling was extended to women, they were channeled into

acquiring skills that made them better cooks, housekeepers and mothers, thus exacerbating their disadvantageous position under colonialism.[33]

In brief, colonial administrators and missionaries were ideologically and culturally not equipped to be champions of gender equality in Africa. They came from European countries where female oppression and exploitation was socially tolerated (and considered normal), and where a man's control over his home ("his castle") was seen as absolute. In Africa, colonial administrators and missionaries facilitated the incorporation and amplification of "tradition" that favored men over women. This was seen as crucial to the survival and stability of the colonial enterprise.

In settler colonies, where migrant labor had become institutionalized by the 1920s (earlier in southern Africa), women came to shoulder not only increased responsibilities but also to discharge those duties that in precolonial Africa would have been considered as belonging to men. These women assumed the responsibility of ensuring the survival and integrity of the family. The production of food and other agricultural tasks became their responsibility.

Male migrant workers "left their families behind them ... intending to return home after acquiring the money to meet taxes, rent or other obligations and to purchase highly prized commodities."[34] To facilitate the flow of African labor, the African family's economic viability as a self-sufficient unit had to be thoroughly compromised. Usually, this involved reduction in the amount of land available to Africans, and also the imposition of colonial taxes that had to be paid in colonial cash. In South Africa, "the system of migrant labour . . . enabled white society to avoid the burden of caring for the workers in the times of unemployment, prolonged sickness or old age."[35] This was exploitation without responsibility. In Mozambique, in addition to domestic chores, "the colonial regime added an additional burden—namely forced labour requisite for the cultivation of cotton and rice."[36]

Perhaps even more distressing was the sexual abuse and exploitation of African women by the white colonial authorities and their African agents. Rape, forced unions, and coercive relationships were common—especially in settler colonies. In Mozambique, for example, European men acted on the racist assumption "that any African woman would be pleased to sleep with them merely because they are white."[37] Sexual abuse of African women emerged, under colonialism, to be a feared and effective weapon of control. Linked to this was the rise and expansion of prostitution. "During the colonial period," Allen and Barbara Isaacman have written in relation to Mozambique, "prostitution was probably the major means an African woman could earn a living."[38]

Under colonialism, no sizeable African women's movement devoted to women's liberation existed in any territory. It would have been difficult for this to happen given the persistent brutal repression of nationalist politics and organizations by the colonial authorities. This absence of women's organizations devoted to women's liberation presented several challenges to both the female activists and the male-led national liberation movements. In almost every territory, the demands of women and those of the national liberation movement came to converge on the need to uproot colonialism and restore the land to the "sons and daughters of the soil."

But the pursuit of women's liberation as an integral part of national liberation inevitably produced a critical ideological challenge; the crucial necessity to develop an ideological framework that simultaneously addressed questions relating to women's liberation and also national liberation while executing a protracted revolutionary war against a brutal and powerful colonial regime and its local allies. This became increasingly significant as many of the national revolutionary movements covered in this book came to rely heavily on women's support.

The course of each of these national revolutionary movements demonstrates that the linkage between women's liberation

and national liberation contained within it tensions and contradictions. These tensions and contradictions point to the varied, and even shifting, definitions of national liberation. What roles did women play in these national revolutionary movements?

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A distinctive feature of the Algerian revolution was that "Algeria is the only predominantly Arab nation to have waged a protracted war against a former colonial power in order to gain independence."[39] This bruising war of national liberation had a tremendous impact on Algerian society.

When the French conquered Algeria in 1830, they looked at their efforts, brutal and discriminatory, as a crusade against Islam and "a restoration of this African land to its Latin (i.e., Roman) past."[40] The French settlers (*pied noirs*) regarded the Algerians as an "inferior race" that was, nonetheless, useful in providing the labor needed to exploit the newly conquered territory. The local Islamic culture was despised and, "a host of pre-conceived notions about the Algerian were accepted uncritically, without examining either their veracity or causation: he was incorrigibly idle and incompetent; he only understood force; he was an innate criminal and an instinctive rapist."[41]

To undermine Islam and its social significance and its influence the French not only alienated land for the settlers, but also "converted many of the mosques into barracks and bars and abolished most of the Koranic schools."[42] This was part of the French "civilizing mission" to Africa.

The *pied noirs* made special efforts to exploit the question of women in Islamic Algeria. They "argued that equality could not be given to a people who practised polygamy and treated their women as inferior."[43] They postured as champions of women's liberation and sought every opportunity to turn the Algerian women against their men and religion. It is worth recalling here that in 1958, the French army in Algeria actively encouraged the "battle of the veil," during which it "sought to win over the women

of Algeria by encouraging their emancipation by first of all having them shed the veil."[44] This theatrical and tragic spectacle, undertaken by a mutinous army, led to no massive or even significant defection of Algerian women to the French cause. Still, the *pied noirs* argued that no close relationship was possible between themselves and the Algerians because of the status of the Algerian women. Because "the Muslim woman" was "recluse and veiled," so ran the colonial argument, this "hindered families from getting together, households from entertaining each other."[45] This position, and many similar ones, was held onto by the *pied noirs* at a period when gender equality was clearly not a reality in Europe and when, specifically, "in France until 1966, a woman needed her husband's permission before she could legally get a job."[46]

The forcible expropriation of land for the *pied noirs* undermined the indigenous local domestic economy. This, in turn, led to massive unemployment, poverty and then desperation. Algeria became a society under siege. In this state of economic desperation and unrelenting political repression, Algerians turned inward and sought refuge in their Islamic culture. "Islam became the beleaguered symbol for [a] separate Algerian identity."[47] Under colonialism, Islam in Algeria became extremely politicized and the local institutions venerated. If Algerians were going to have a future, they had to protect their past, and so Islam once again "provided a glimmer of hope to the faithful that the humiliations and the misery that they experienced under French rule would not be a permanent condition."[48]

Family and religion came to symbolize a separate Algerian identity, unpolluted by colonialism. The remembered family was patriarchal. Women became a symbol of both the separate Algerian identity and the "ideal family." They "became both the revered objects of the collective act of national redemption and the role models for the new nationalist patriarchal family."[49] Women were seen as custodians of an authentic Algerian culture that was based on the teachings of Islam.

The cultural presumptions of French colonialism—arrogant and racist—became significant factors in shaping the nature of the Algerian revolution. The French denied the very existence of a distinct Algerian culture.[50] It is, therefore, not surprising that the Algerian nationalist struggle sought for the restoration of a uniquely Algerian culture.

The main nationalist movement, the National Liberation Front (FLN), adopted an "ideology of cultural restoration wrapped in the mantle of radical nationalism."[51] This ideology of "cultural restoration" determined changes that would be tolerated alongside "radical nationalism." No other aspect of the Algerian society was as carefully watched, monitored, and regulated as the position of women in the revolution and in the society.

The FLN's key strategic objective was to mobilize the majority of Algerians against French settler colonialism. From the start, the FLN realized that Islam would be the medium through which the politics of nationalism would be communicated to the Algerian people. As a result, the nationalist movement did not launch an assault on Islam but rather strove for "a majoritarian national mandate"; this mandate was Islamic and Algerian. FLN's radicalism promised to deliver "cultural restoration" and national political independence.

As the war of national liberation raged on, the FLN strategically "avoided discussing religious matters and concentrated instead on the socio-economic consequences of colonial domination."[52] It avoided challenging the deeply-held views in society on the family, its organization and structure, "because doing so entailed the risk of alienating those who were intent upon protecting the remnants of a private life centered on women and the family."[53] To avoid alienating its constituents and principal source of its support, the FLN chose instead to be vague and ambiguous on the gender question.[54] The war was being fought to restore "authentic Algerian culture" and to dislodge French colonialism. To this end, the participation of women was structured to be in accord with local traditions and expectations. Thus, "while

women became involved in the resistance and politics, their activities did not collide with previously existing gender expectations."[55] Women undertook several roles in the Algerian revolution, but throughout this harrowing experience, it was understood that they "had of necessity to be respectful of men's egos."[56] Revolution was carried out within acceptable gender relations.

The women who joined the FLN (about ten thousand participated in the revolution)[57] were first and foremost nationalists. "Women's nationalistic feelings were just as deep as men's. In many ways, by joining the movement women acted as contestants of men's monopoly over nationalist militancy."[58] But they joined the struggle whose main ideology was already in place. And in spite of their spirited and courageous performance and sacrifice, women did not cause the FLN nor the Algerian society to alter in any significant way the definition of the ideology of national liberation. Specifically, "the family and the realm of the father's authority over his wife and children was to remain intact in order for the FLN's claim to represent Algerian society to be valid."[59] This was a crucial component of the "majoritarian national mandate." It is, therefore, fair to argue that in Algeria women participated in a revolution that had a particularly restrictive ideology on gender questions.

The majority of women participants in the Algerian revolution were peasants. They provided shelter to the militants, many of whom were also of peasant origin. These peasant women also "fed and housed the militants who were pursued by the police in the towns."[60]

Those women who volunteered to join the FLN found that they were generally excluded from combat roles. During the complex development of the revolutionary war some women volunteers came to bear arms to perform specialized duties like strategic assassinations or delivery of bombs. Nonetheless, the majority of the women performed noncombat roles specified to them by the FLN. Women were expected to offer "moral support for the combatants and resisters;" and to aid "families and children

of the maquisards and those of the imprisoned and interned."[61] These roles were assigned by the leadership of the FLN, which, throughout the war of national liberation, remained exclusively male. Women in the revolutionary movement occupied those roles traditionally associated with women "like nursing, cooking, carrying weapons and hiding people."[62] But the performance of these traditional roles in the name of national liberation was viewed as being different from the nonrevolutionary period. Revolution and its needs had caused a transformation, however temporary, in the status of these traditional roles. And so, "instead of introducing new roles for women," Mervant Hatem observed perceptively, "the old ones were imbued with new respect."[63] Even in these difficult circumstances in which they performed prescribed roles, women in the Algerian revolution distinguished themselves through bravery, persistence, perseverance, and dedication. Some became national heroines. One such woman was Djamila Bouhired. Today she is "perhaps the very best known woman revolutionary in Algeria."[64]

The social conduct of women was carefully scrutinized and regulated by the FLN. In this regard, there was no cohabitation allowed of militants and participants in the national revolutionary war. Nor was "free love" encouraged. In rendering these duties, the FLN in essence became "a surrogate patriarchal authority."[65]

The participation of women in the revolution introduced changes in Algerian culture on two fronts; personal and societal. Women, Marnia Lazreg informs us, "forged bonds with one another"; assumed "a sense of responsibility and purposive action"; and acquired a tremendous sense of "confidence in themselves."[66] The revolutionary war also contributed, however unintentionally, in the weakening of the "traditional patriarchal family structure." Specifically, "the father was now questioned by his son (with regard to his militancy for example); the father could no longer give orders to a daughter he knew to be working for the national cause; women fighting by the side of men could no longer be regarded as passive objects; heroines appeared as

'models' for other women; independent feminine revolutionary cells stood in refutation of the idea that women could only be complements to men."[67]

Throughout the duration of the revolutionary struggle, Algerian women did not demand their distinct rights as women. Their reluctance to undertake a uniquely limited feminist agenda during the war was largely determined by the realization that, just like men, "their basic political and economic rights were denied by the colonial order."[68] Could they have organized a feminist organization to rival the FLN? Marnia Lazreg correctly noted that it would have been impossible to organize "a movement focused on women's rights exclusively during the war."[69] Such a movement would have had a limited appeal. Most probably, it would have been condemned as dangerously divisive. "Who would have been its leaders? Who would have been its adversaries? French men? French women? Algerian men? All of these?"[70] Many women militants remained convinced that their duty during the revolutionary war was to support the nationalist struggle against French colonialism. It should not be forgotten that "women had as many grudges as men against the colonial order" and saw "entering the war against the colonizer as an opportunity to even the score."[71]

By 1962, it was clear that the Algerian revolutionary struggle had as yet to address itself directly and forthrightly on the question of the status of women in the projected liberated society. Women had, through their varied roles, made a dramatic and an unforgettable impression "on the collective consciousness of Algerians, males and females."[72] But this had led mostly to general muffled approval from men. There had been praise for women's "heroic deeds" from the leadership of the FLN. Nonetheless, these praises tended to be general rather than specific. They tended to be devoid of any programmatic suggestions as to how gender and social relations would be altered, or even modified, in light of the revolutionary experience.

Algerian women, both rural and urban, placed their faith in the future, convinced that the country's leadership would not forget their sacrifices and "heroic deeds" during the tense period of the revolutionary struggle. And "indeed not being organized as a political faction or as members of one, they could rely only on leaders' memories of their contribution to independence for the promotion of their rights and the recognition of their needs."[73] Would the power of memory alone be enough to persuade the newly liberated country to make "the liberation of Algerian women" an integral part of the country's reconstruction?

The earliest colonial explanations of women's participation in the Mau Mau in Kenya tended to attribute this phenomenon to amorphous irrational forces. Mau Mau was, of course, the peasant armed revolt against British colonial rule in Kenya. Kikuyu women, according to the colonialists, were so "oppressed and, therefore, bound to welcome anything that would deliver them from this situation, violence included."[74] Other explanations touched on Kikuyu women's superstitious nature, and also their general enjoyment of violence. These explanations strategically avoided attributing the participation of women in the Mau Mau to material causes, specifically economic causes and the demands of nationalism.

Alienation of land in the Kikuyu reserve for settlers and subsequent migration of a substantial proportion of the Kikuyu to the Rift Valley and urban areas permanently changed the social and economic organization of Kikuyu society. "One of the direct and most adverse results of such migration" to the Rift Valley and the urban areas "was the loosening of the cohesion in the traditional society. Family units were particularly affected and the need for modified roles became apparent."[75]

Women took on traditional male roles in agricultural production and struggled to maintain the survival and integrity of the family. They engaged "in small petty businesses in an effort to subsidize their husband's meagre wages and inadequate farm produce. This was often in petty business, mainly in food items

such as vegetables, poultry, and eggs which were sold in the local market."[76] In agriculture, the introduction of cash crops severely limited women's access to land. Men became the "legal" owners of the land and proceeded, where possible, to plant cash crops that yielded cash revenue to which women had no ready access.[77] These economic difficulties, compounded by constant labor needs from assorted branches of the colonial administration, heightened the political consciousness of women "in the years before the Emergency"[78] was declared in 1952. Economic desperation, poverty, and general struggle to survive, came to be associated with colonialism. These women did not see any possibility of improvement in their economic livelihood and social advancement under colonialism. It was clear that colonialism was the enemy.

The involvement of women in the Mau Mau has remained, like the revolt itself, complex and even frustratingly elusive. Women performed roles whose central significance is only now being accurately chronicled. Recent scholarship, inspired in part by the growth and establishment of women's history, has been keen to highlight these roles, once neglected or considered subsidiary to men's activities and undertakings.[79]

Women militants were divided between those who remained in the Kikuyu reserve (later in the concentration villages) and those who went into the forests to join the guerillas. In the reserve, Kikuyu women were central in the procurement of food and its transportation to the edge of the forests or sometimes into the interior of the forests. The forests remained the general base area of the Mau Mau guerillas throughout the duration of the revolt.

The procurement of food was organized at the village level, having no evident inspiration nor linkage to the Mau Mau Central Committee in Nairobi, while it existed. The women who organized this food procurement were dedicated nationalists who had taken the Mau Mau oath(s). "The number of oaths one had taken in the Mau Mau was often used as a measure of the degree of loyalty to the movement."[80] This food gathering and

transportation did not involve every woman. Only those initiated by swearing an oath to the Mau Mau through oathing could be entrusted with the intricacies of secret networks and contacts. Betrayal was feared and often occurred. It is, therefore, important to point out that even in the provision of food to the guerillas, only a very small proportion of Kikuyu women were actively and routinely involved.

It is true that "the rebellion could not have endured for seven years without the supplies of information, food, medicine and guns that flowed from the town and reserves into the forest. From the first days of the uprising, women were the primary source of these items."[81] Yet, it is also vital to remember that women were not singly the backbone of the "passive wing." The organization of local support for the Mau Mau involved cooperation between male and female militants.

Women were also actively involved in information gathering. They spied on behalf of the Mau Mau and supplied information on enemy colonial troops with the purpose of obtaining government secrets about the prosecution of the war. The information gathered by women was crucial to the survival of the Mau Mau guerillas in the forest. Often, it was "the only means of communication for the freedom fighters!"[82] A significant degree of trust had to exist and be actively maintained (and tested) between the guerillas and the women who rendered this crucial courier service. Most of the information was carried orally for fear of one being captured with incriminating documents. Besides, most of these women were illiterate peasants.

In the forests, only a very small insignificant number actually became guerillas (*itungati*), i.e., engaged in combat. Instead, most of the women who went into the forests performed noncombat duties. These included cooking, keeping the camps clean, caring for the sick and wounded, and also singing for the entertainment of those in the camps. To safeguard the security of the camps, women "were often given the job of clearing a camp and wiping off all traces of recent habitation before fighters left one camp for

another."[83] Women were also responsible for the transportation of "loads ... of essential camp equipment." These were domestic duties that ordinarily women would have been expected to perform in the home setting in the reserves. The sexual division of labor that obtained in the Kikuyu reserves under colonialism had been transplanted into the forests.

The Mau Mau revolt, however, led Kikuyu (and Embu and Meru) women to take oaths. Oathing was forbidden to women in Kikuyu cultural tradition. Cora Ann Presley argues that this oathing process "was one of the changes in gender roles nationalism introduced for women."[84] In reality, this oathing process was not as consequential as Cora Ann Presley states. Oathing facilitated the entry of women into the Mau Mau movement to perform duties that were largely traditional. Oathing did not lead to a revision of gender roles in the Mau Mau revolt nor did it force the nationalist movement to pay specific attention to gender questions.

Throughout its turbulent existence, the Mau Mau failed to address itself to gender questions, either during the revolt or in a possible liberated Kenya. It is therefore accurate to state that "Mau Mau as a revolutionary movement did not reach the stage where questions of gender, sexism, sexual division of labour, and property ownership were considered crucial to the movement's legitimacy, expansion, and survival."[85] All available evidence shows that the Mau Mau revolt did not consider gender and class questions seriously and extensively as part of an overall ideological position. Those women recruited in the revolt either in the "passive wing" or in the forest never assumed any positions of commanding leaders. "Women," Margaret Wangui Gachihi emphasized, "rarely rose to positions of overall leadership."[86]

There is no evidence that women participated in the critical discussions about the revolt in the forest nor were their opinions and input sought by the male leadership of the revolt. The two main meetings convened by the Mau Mau leadership in the forest were (i) the famous Mwathe meeting of August 1953 and (ii) the

February 1954 meeting that led to the formation of "Kenya Parliament." These meetings did not address gender questions nor even questions that can broadly be defined as the "ideology of the new society." These were meetings about the necessity for unity, coordination, and focus.

The Mau Mau guerillas "did not liberate any area" and were therefore "denied the necessary laboratory to try out their ideas about freedom, and social and economic organization."[87] It should further be recalled that the guerillas in the forest "never looked at themselves as supplanting Kenya African Union (KAU) leadership in detention or prison," and therefore it would be a mistake to look at them "as a party or group of people who aimed to provide leadership with aims and objectives radically different from those endorsed by [the] KAU."[88] By 1953, when it was banned, the KAU had not articulated any concise position on the gender questions. It had not yet formulated a coherent ideology to guide it in its quest for Uhuru (Independence). In fact, there were few among its ranks who believed that seeking for independence was a realistic goal. But above all, the KAU was not a radical revolutionary party.

In 1963, when Kenya attained its political independence from Britain, the "woman question" had not been adequately addressed nor tackled by the competing nationalist parties, the Kenya African National Union (KANU) and the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU).

The revolutionary struggle in Guinea-Bissau was led by the African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde (PAIGC), whose inspired and reflective leader was Amilcar Cabral until his assassination in 1973. The PAIGC was very explicit in its position on women in both the revolutionary struggle and in postcolonial liberated society. "From the beginning of the political mobilization for the war of liberation," Stephanie Urdang would later write, "the need for equality between men and women was made an explicit and integral part of the overall revolution."[89] The PAIGC recognized quite

early that the revolutionary struggle in Guinea-Bissau would not expand unless it involved women, many of whom were peasants. These women carried the burden of dual oppression; "... expressed in Guinea-Bissau as the need to 'fight two colonialisms—the one of the Portuguese and the other of men.'"[90]

In their everyday lives the women of Guinea-Bissau, drawn from various ethnic groups, held no political power: They were generally excluded from political decision making. "Almost without exception, it is the men who are responsible for the decision-making process, whether they are chiefs or members of councils of elders."[91] It is, therefore, not surprising that in its initial efforts at politicization of the masses before the actual fighting began, the PAIGC singled out women for special attention. The party activists encouraged women to join the revolutionary struggle not only to dislodge the Portuguese oppressors but also to free themselves.

The PAIGC ensured that women were involved in some leadership positions even at the very local level. This was a clear break with the previous nonrevolutionary tradition that had excluded women from political and social leadership. Consequently, "one of the most important steps the party took initially was to stipulate that at least two women be elected to the five member village councils. These councils were established soon after an area had been liberated to carry out local party work, to handle the daily organization of life in the village and to promote support for the war."[92] To be sure, not all members of the party (even some in leadership positions), supported this radical position on women. There were those who opposed it (in silence or by sabotage), but still publicly endorsed the party's stand on the matter.

In a series of lectures delivered to the party leaders in 1969, Amilcar Cabral acknowledged that some male members of the party were opposed to women assuming positions of leadership. "Some comrades," Amilcar Cabral stated, "do their utmost to prevent women taking charge, even when there are women who have more ability to lead than they do ... the men comrades, some,

do not want to understand that liberty for our people means women's liberation as well, sovereignty for our people means that women as well must play a part, and that the strength of our party is worth more if women join in as well to lead with the men."[93]

The party encouraged its women members to be active in demanding their rights and freedoms. Women were expected to actively participate in their own liberation within the ideological framework of the party. They could not attain their liberation if they passively waited for the male members to deliver liberation to them. To this end, the "PAIGC showed a consciousness of the fact that women's liberation had to be fought on two fronts—from above and from below. Party pronouncements in themselves were insufficient: it was essential that women themselves take up the issue, so that liberation would be truly theirs. An essential element of this is that women raise their own demands.... From the outset, this leadership stated clearly that women's liberation, like any freedom, is not given. It is a right, but it has to be taken."[94]

A combination of women's activism for their rights and the party's commitment to gender equality, had by the 1970s, even before Cabral's death, produced some impressive results. In the liberated areas under its political control, the PAIGC instituted several reforms affecting the lives of women. It banned the practice of forced marriages. This change in policy endeared the party immensely to young women, many of whom showed their gratitude by becoming enthusiastic activists and participants in the national revolutionary struggle. Women were also allowed to divorce their husbands, especially if they "had been forced to marry against their wishes."[95]

All these changes, undertaken in the midst of the war for national liberation, were part of the PAIGC's overall objectives of expelling the Portuguese and building "a new, non-exploitative society." The party, under Amilcar Cabral's leadership, sought to found "a revolutionary society based on a socialist path of development."[96]

The women of Mozambique shouldered perhaps the heaviest burden of Portuguese colonialism in Africa. They were expected to perform forced labor (*chibalo*) alongside their traditional domestic labor in their homes. With their men recruited for *chibalo* and continuously absent from home, women came to shoulder the responsibility of producing food on the land not designated for white settlers and other colonial enterprises. And so, "in order to avoid starvation, women could only work on their own fields when they were not engaged in forced labour on settlers' plantations. This meant having to devote the early hours of the morning to their own fields between 4-6 a.m.—and again late at night by the moonlight."[97]

Chibalo was a brutal form of labor exploitation. Usually no food or clothing was provided.[98] Road building, Stephanie Urdang writes, was the responsibility of women. In this capacity, they "were ordered to bring their own tools, and when they did not, dug the hard earth with their own fingers at gunpoint. Rape was common."[99]

In Mozambique, the struggle for national liberation was organized and spearheaded by the Frelimo Party. The party had, from its formation in 1962, embraced the principle of gender equality and the emancipation of women. Thus, the "emancipation of women has been a central tenet of Frelimo policy since early in the liberation war."[100] This embrace of gender equality had nonetheless remained vague, theoretical, and even abstract. Although "sex equality was on agenda in Frelimo's ideology and radical pronouncements," it nonetheless "represented a vision of the future rather than a norm governing the behavior of Frelimo members."[101]

When the women joined in the liberation struggle led by Frelimo, they learned very quickly that the male leadership was not immediately eager or prepared to share power with them. Women were instead assigned noncombat roles. They worked "in fields surrounding Frelimo bases... cultivated maize and manioc ... and were expected to cook food and provide other domestic tasks when guerilla units returned to the main bases."[102] Another

important role performed by women was the tedious, and often dangerous, task of transporting war material from Tanzania (Frelimo's main administrative base) to internal bases in northern Mozambique and also from one internal base to another.

Women were also quite effective as mobilizers and recruiters. A basic strategy here was to convert other women to the cause who, in turn, would be expected to convince or pressure their husbands into joining Frelimo. Pauline Mateos, a commander of a women's detachment in northern Mozambique, outlined how this strategy worked: "Some men have no heart for fighting, they are afraid or they don't want to leave their families and fields. But once a woman tells her man to go and fight, he feels more inclined."[103] Women also spied for Frelimo. Young girls were extremely effective spies since they were never really suspected of being Frelimo functionaries by the Portuguese colonial authorities.

These were supporting roles; essential, but still supportive. The main effort remained male led and dominated military combat against the Portuguese. And men guarded this role fiercely against any invasion by women. Yet as "women [volunteers] increased in number, absorbed the Frelimo rhetoric, and gained greater self-confidence,"[104] they began to demand extended and varied roles in the liberation struggle. The result was the formation of a women's detachment under the Frelimo general command in 1967. Subjected to the same training as men, these women were later utilized as defenders of liberated areas; while others joined in actual combat alongside male guerillas.[105] It has to be stressed that in spite of these truly dramatic changes, the use of women "in actual combat was avoided whenever possible."[106] The defense of liberated areas exposed many peasant women to rudimentary military training and skills, for example, handling guns. It is, therefore, not surprising that in retrospect many women in Mozambique look at the period of the liberation war as a time when they were respected and men and women were treated equally.[107]

The struggle for gender equality accelerated after 1967. The women's detachment, valuable as it was, elicited contradictory responses. There were men in Mozambique who denounced and detested the women's intrusion into the warrior sphere. "Despite official pronouncements that women had the right and, indeed, the responsibility to bear arms, many northern men, especially in Muslim communities, viewed them with contempt."[108] On the other hand, this women's detachment, unique in its existence, "helped to change the attitudes of men both inside and outside Frelimo."[109] There were many men and women immensely impressed by the abilities and courage of these women guerillas. On an individual level, women guerillas felt a sense of "self-liberation";[110] participation in the revolutionary war gave them self-confidence, self-worth and purpose.

What did Frelimo mean by "emancipation of women?" At its first national conference, the newly formed Organization of Mozambican Women (OMM), debated and clarified this issue. In his address to the conference, Samora Machel, the president of Frelimo, reiterated the importance the party attached to the emancipation of women. He stated: "The liberation of women is the fundamental necessity for the revolution, a guarantee of its continuity and a precondition for victory."[111] This conference was at pains to warn Mozambican women against the danger of identifying men as their enemy. Western feminist liberation movements, whose values Samora Machel considered to be "corrupt ideas,"[112] had mistakenly identified men as the enemy, thereby leaving the oppressive and exploitative capitalist system intact. Machel argued that the "primary contradiction" remained "between women and the social order; conflicts between men and women, although often serious, are still secondary."[113] As far as possible, Frelimo endeavored to steer the OMM away from embracing the "corrupt ideas" of Western feminists who had been diverted from real material issues to secondary issues that did not affect the functioning of the capitalist system and its value system. To both Frelimo and the OMM, it was counterproductive for the national liberation struggle to engage

in gender warfare. The party had settled on the basic premise that "women's inferior position is built into the division of labour. This is what must be changed if women are to be emancipated."[114]

Frelimo also looked at the question of morality, i.e., revolutionary morality to be an integral part of emancipation. During the revolutionary war, Frelimo encouraged self-control amongst the guerillas, male and female. "As a revolutionary organization, Frelimo felt itself under continual obligation to set an example and was aware that the actions of the vanguard were under close scrutiny."[115] This was especially true in its relationship with the villagers on whom it depended for support and sustenance. Frelimo felt strongly that "it was incumbent upon the organization to observe local ethics and to urge militias to restrain themselves whenever possible, even if given a certain encouragement by local girls who looked upon them as heroes."[116]

In their definition of emancipation, both Frelimo and OMM attached special importance to motherhood. Machel firmly stated that in forming OMM the party was aware that "woman is responsible for all generations. It is the woman who is in constant contact with children. It is the woman who imparts revolutionary concepts to children, through her contact and particular responsibility."[117]

Progress toward the emancipation of women in liberated areas was affected by the reluctance of some men to quickly embrace the new revolutionary culture, and also by illiteracy, which was widespread in colonial Mozambique. It should be stated, however, that the position of women living in the liberated areas was markedly better than that of women in areas still under direct Portuguese colonial control. The introduction of literacy and schooling by Frelimo facilitated the inculcation of new and progressive values on social justice and gender equality. Thus, "At all levels the schools along with teaching basic skills helped to instill a new set of values. They attacked the historic myth of female inferiority as well as the colonial myths that negated Mozambican culture and divorced Mozambicans from

their own history. In this respect schools became an important instrument for liberating the past and setting in motion the creation of a new cultural identity."[118]

Throughout the revolutionary war, Frelimo stated repeatedly that its central goal remained the expulsion of Portuguese colonial rule from Mozambique. But beyond this, the party also aimed to create a new free society; free from exploitation and oppression and racism. The emancipation of women was an integral part of this definition of national liberation. To Machel and Frelimo, colonialism meant "exploitation, oppression, humiliation, social and economic discrimination, racism, tribalism and regionalism"; and also "bribery, corruption and immorality, robbery, nepotism, favouritism and patronage, individualism and ambition, servility and subservience, prostitution, vagrancy, banditry, unemployment and delinquency, begging, orgies, bacchanalia and drunkenness, drugs, destruction of the family, social disruption, insecurity and fear."[119] The destruction of "all this was the aim" of Frelimo during, and after, the revolutionary war of national liberation.

The Angolan revolution was characterized by the presence of several parties. By 1974, there were three such parties: the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA), the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), and the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA).

The MPLA emerged as the most progressive and nationalist movement. Its operation in Angola, throughout the national liberation struggle, was however hampered by several crucial factors. The most prominent of these factors was "geography and demography." After the 1961 massacre in which the Portuguese indiscriminately killed over 20,000 people,[120] the MPLA regrouped in Congo (Brazzaville) and launched guerilla warfare against them in Cabinola and eastern Angola.[121] A particular handicap experienced by MPLA at this stage was that it had been forced to operate in a sparsely populated area that could not adequately provide it with much-needed food and supplies.[122] It was cut off from the bulk of the Angolan population that "lived far away in the centre and west

of the country, and it was there that the MPLA had to look for wide support."[123] By 1974, the MPLA had not managed to establish its presence in these areas. This reality meant that the party was never able to reach the bulk of the Angolan peasantry prior to the attainment of independence in 1975. And even after this date, civil wars and external aggression prevented it from immediately extending its considerable influence beyond its original bases of support.

The women of Angola joined in the national liberation struggle before the formation of the Organization of Angolan Women (OMA), the women's organization, in 1962. But prior to this, the incorporation of women lacked the dual focus that the OMA provided: to liberate the country from colonialism and also to liberate women from male oppression and also oppression of "tribal traditions." The OMA, in keeping with the declared policy of MPLA, reaffirmed women's liberation as an integral part of the national liberation.

Initially, women mainly performed their traditional roles, preparing food (mainly cassava meal), and washing clothes. After the formation of OMA, women's roles expanded considerably to include participation in combat. Still, a major objective of the OMA was to harness the energies of women both for national liberation and their own liberation. The OMA was consistent in stating that it "was not created to oppose men," but rather to include women among the "ranks of those who were prepared to accept every sacrifice and risk in order that their people should be free from colonial domination."[124]

In those areas where the MPLA had considerable presence, it abolished the bride price[125] and endorsed a program of action that pledged: "No more exploitation but minimum guaranteed wages and equal pay for equal work; an end to discrimination on grounds of race, ethnic origin, sex or age and free public health and education."[126]

Persistent ideological struggles within the party unfortunately affected the pace of the revolutionary struggle. By 1970 Agos-

tinno Neto, president of the MPLA, conceded that the party was a movement "in which all tendencies and persons willing to take part in the struggle against Portuguese colonialism are accepted." He added that MPLA's members were "bound together by the common will to fight colonialism ... but while there is one organizational structure, there is not one ideological position."[127] To justify the "sacrifices of the struggle," MPLA was committed to building "a non-elitist and non-capitalist" united society.

The two main movements in Zimbabwe involved in the national war of liberation (*chimurenga*), were the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), together with the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) and its armed wing the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA). These nationalist parties increased their militancy, with varied fortunes, as the nationalist struggle intensified. By 1974—75, and especially after Mozambique attained its independence in 1975, ZANU embraced a socialist analysis of the national struggle for liberation. Mozambique under Frelimo, at this time an avowed Marxist-Leninist party, became the main base area for ZANU and for its military wing, the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA). This development had a decisive impact on ZANU as it refocused its mission in Zimbabwe. During this period, ZANU received "the support of the Chinese and Ethiopians" and proceeded to adopt Mao's tested guerilla tactics. This marked further radicalization of the party and its ideological positions, especially on the question of women's liberation.

A crucial factor to remember is that most of the African women in Zimbabwe were rural peasants, and that the war of national liberation was, for the most part, undertaken in the rural areas. The importance of this reality is as follows: "Because the majority of the population lived in the countryside it is not surprising that the agenda of the peasants and the guerillas during the rural mobilization was dominated by grievances associated with the land and agricultural practices of the white settler government."[128]

Guerillas paid special attention to women. Women, after all, were responsible for food procurement and cooking, and if the guerillas needed access to this food they had to speak directly to the women. In general, women were in agreement with the guerillas over the broad causes of the struggle: "... they could identify with guerilla claims that they were fighting for lost lands and an end to economic hardship.... The women described their grievances over the lack of employment opportunities, low wages for Africans, and white privileges.[129]

The involvement of women in the liberation struggle can be divided between mothers and their children. Mothers stayed in Zimbabwe and became central to the viability of the "passive wing" of the struggle. They cultivated the food that fed the comrades (as the guerillas were known), when these young men and women crossed into Zimbabwe from Mozambique. Mothers also made cash contributions, attended clandestine meetings called by the comrades, and helped "spread the word"; ensuring that their household remained loyal to the cause.

But they also endured tremendous hardships. Listen to the story of Loice Mushore, one of the "Mothers of the Revolution." Her son, Macmillan, left high school and joined the guerilla army in Mozambique. Still, her household was not free of suspicion. Comrades, acting on information gathered through unverified rumor, held her husband to be a collaborator, aiding Ian Smith's colonial forces. One evening, her husband was shot and killed in cold blood before her eyes, and the homestead set ablaze.[130] Yet, in spite of this haunting tragedy, she continued to support the liberation struggle. "I used to help in collecting food for the comrades. Sometimes I would help the *chimbwidos* with cooking."[131] One of her sons was later killed by drunken soldiers of the colonial army. When her son, Macmillan, returned home, he was hailed as a hero. But he was grief stricken at the death of his father who, as it turned out, was killed based on inaccurate information. To Loice Mushore, the liberation war had indeed been "very tough."

The young women were divided between those who went to join the liberation movements in either Zambia or Mozambique, and those who remained in Zimbabwe. In the refugee camps, especially in Mozambique, these young women were trained in guerilla warfare. Others performed the duties of nurses and educators.[132] They were exposed to the harsh conditions of war and many "weren't able to wash often," so that when they "were menstruating things were difficult."[133] This indeed, was not a problem specific to Zimbabwe's women guerillas. In Namibia, there were similar problems. Ellen Musialela, assistant secretary for finance of the SWAPO Women's Council during the liberation struggle, recalled that the "number one problem" for women guerillas was lack of "sanitary towels." She saw with her "own eyes ... how women were forced to use grass during their periods, and had to go without panties."[134]

Within the refugee camps, especially in Mozambique, the division of labor started to reflect, to some degree, ZANU's tentative steps toward gender equality. Thus, for example, "it was the men who did the cooking, because the food was cooked in very large drums. The girls did the washing and other lighter things."[135] Still, men dominated in the leadership positions in the liberation movements and the guerilla army. They also comprised the largest majority of the guerillas deployed for combat, although a few women had been trained to go and fight alongside the men.[136]

These young women had not only gained access to training for combat and other specialties but were also undergoing drastic personal changes, especially in the area of sexuality. Nyasha, a young woman who joined the guerilla forces in 1975, later related her experiences. She recalled that young women "had access to contraceptives in the bush. People brought them overseas and I am glad because really I wouldn't like to have a baby in the bush."[137] She realized that this was clearly not sanctioned within her culture, and that some "male comrades did not like contraceptives because they thought it was murder." Nonetheless, she argued that contraceptives were helpful in view of the

fact "that people have sexual feelings in spite of the dangers of the struggle."[138] Abortions were possible in the bush during the revolutionary war. In coming to terms with abortion, she states: "If a person does not want a baby or if you can't manage to keep a baby you should not stop someone having an abortion just because it is not part of our culture."[139]

The young women activists within Zimbabwe, who were mainly teenagers, were known as *chimbwidos*. As the liberation war intensified in the 1970s, these young women became indispensable to the survival of the guerilla forces in the countryside. "They prepared food late at night and carried it out into the bush to escape detection by the police and army. They did laundry and obtained supplies."[140] It is also vital to mention here the activities of the "young teenage boys and children" who remained in Zimbabwe and worked for the liberation struggle. Known as *mujibhas*, they were chiefly the "'eyes and ears' for the freedom fighters in the operational areas. They passed on information about the movements of the regime's security forces, carried messages and served as guides."[141]

Both the *chimbwidos* and the *mujibhas* undertook very risky activities. Many *chimbwidos* were tortured, murdered, or generally harassed by the colonial enemy forces. It should come as no surprise that "After the war, mass graves were found, the bodies reburied without any attempt at identification of cause or persons."[142]

The relationship between the guerillas and women was, on a day-to-day basis, complicated by the issue of personal grievances. Women came to the guerillas with personal grievances that quite often were related to their relationships with their husbands or mates. These proved to be very tricky issues for the guerillas. Although their party, ZANU, had committed itself to the theory of gender equality, this remained a nonspecific doctrine. The guerillas, young and inexperienced about marital matters, did not have a party manual on gender equality that provided answers to all the varied and complex questions that they encountered in the

countryside. There was hence a tendency to improvise, to solve specific problems, and then lecture the offenders, hoping that such actions would serve as a deterrent. "The guerillas' attempts to resolve domestic disputes varied over time and from village to village. In some cases, the guerillas spoke privately with husband and wife together. Sometimes the disputes were discussed publicly at *pungwes*. In some cases, the guerillas reasoned with men, threatened them, and even beat them."[143] These efforts proved difficult to sustain for there was the danger in acting on insufficient information. The guerillas also had the desire to win the support of both men and women of every village in which they operated.

In imposing their will on the ever delicate domestic matters, the guerillas ran the risk of being viewed as high-handed and arbitrary. At the height of the revolutionary war in the 1970s, "the guerillas would come through a village at night and hear a woman crying because she was being beaten and would then beat the husband."[144] Such actions, while offering temporary relief and therefore laudable, did not provide a structural remedy to the problem. Related to this is the fact that the guerillas did not offer a comprehensive analysis of the gender problems in the areas in which they operated; nor did they—in their own demands—provide radical solutions. Unlike the refugee camps, "the sexual division of labour did not change in the villages."[145]

There also existed tension between the elders, who had always been the sources of authority and legitimacy in the villages, and the guerillas. "Elders in rural areas," Rudo Gaidzanwa observed, "were unhappy with the dilution of their authority and its replacement in some areas by the authority of the guerillas and their supporters amongst the youth. Young women were also taking advantage of this shift in authority to assert themselves by exercising their sexuality with guerillas and sometimes with soldiers of the regime without parental consent."[146]

By 1979, on the eve of victory, the way ahead for the "woman question" in Zimbabwe remained both very promising and problematic. ZANU, the major nationalist revolutionary

party, whose official name would change to ZANU/PF, had clearly committed itself to gender equality. Robert Mugabe, the party's president affirmed this position in 1979, stating that "the national struggle ... especially at its highest level, when it became an armed national struggle, became as much a process towards the liberation of the nation as toward the emancipation of women."[147] ZANU had also, as stated, embraced a socialist analysis of the struggle. This ideological position and posture led many "young men and women in the movement to assume that the struggle for socialism would be intensified after the liberation of Zimbabwe."[148] The explicit implication of this assumption was that women's liberation in postcolonial Zimbabwe would be tied to the socialist reconstruction of the country.

The involvement of African women in the struggle for the liberation of South Africa must be seen against the background of apartheid. Specifically, no significant unity existed throughout this struggle between white and black women. White women, on the whole, identified with the structures and laws of apartheid that were racist, oppressive, and exploitative. A clear example of this identification is provided by the outcome of the struggle for women's suffrage in South Africa. In a bid to eliminate the limited African vote in the Cape Province, General Hertzog, the prime minister in the 1920s, "piloted a Women's Enfranchisement Bill through Parliament that applied to white women only." The Bill became law in 1930.[149] In a very definitive way, as Cherryl Walker has written, the "suffrage movement was thus used by Hertzog—but it allowed itself to be used."[150]

In allowing themselves to be used, white women revealed once again that "they were not wishing to overthrow the structures on which, ultimately, their privileges rested."[151] These privileges included the ability to employ black women to do domestic work while they [white women] "took up outside employment or leisure time activities."[152] Women's liberation for these white women did not include the liberation of black women. The actions of white women demonstrated, convincingly, that it was possible

to be a feminist and a racist. They seemed liberated because other women were made to serve them in a menial capacity.

It is, therefore, not surprising that from the outset of the struggle for African liberation in South Africa, African women identified apartheid and its forerunners as the enemy. African women's struggle revolved around: "passes; threat to family survival; education for their children; conditions of their work in capitalist production,"[153] and the general pervasive institutions of racism.

Issues that concerned women also touched, in a very real sense, on the life and experience of almost every African in South Africa. Hence, "so-called women's issues, are in fact part of a larger struggle against the complex matrix of the apartheid system."[154] Apartheid and its structures were seen as the fount of misery, oppression, and exploitation. There could be neither progress nor freedom so long as apartheid reigned. It is this linkage that has over the years prompted many African women activists to argue that the struggle for African freedom must take precedence over gender struggle. "I take the view," Christine Qunta has forcefully written, "that we are Africans before we are women, and that the problems we confront in our continent arise largely from the fact that for between a hundred and five hundred years our land and our lives have been ruled by outsiders for their own benefit."[155]

In the long and complex struggle for liberation in South Africa, there was a steady evolution of strategy from uncoordinated resistance, to coordinated nonviolent resistance, and finally to semicommitment to armed struggle from 1960 onwards. The principal and oldest nationalist movement was the African National Congress (ANC), formed in 1912. In its initial constitution, the ANC denied women full membership. Women were, instead, granted "auxiliary membership," which denied them the right to vote in the party. This initial sustained resistance to gender equality has been attributed to several factors, mainly "cultural" and ideological. The cultural argument stipulates that the ANC leadership was composed of "conservative men, reared in a strongly patriarchal tradition."[156] Consequently, these men

resisted any activity that might entail gender equality. This, however, is not the whole story.

Ideologically, the early leaders of the ANC aspired to emulate the conservative bourgeoisie values of the white racist rulers; "the system of values of the dominant group within society—the white middle class."[157] Many of them had been educated abroad on top of being heavily influenced by the teachings of white Christian missionaries.[158] These leaders would continue to be "influenced by the British liberal traditions" and "to cherish an ideal society that is derived from the social democratic model so prevalent in Western Europe."[159] These liberal Western values had not been exemplary in advocating and then instituting comprehensive programs toward gender equality. To emulate liberal Western values on gender matters was to reinforce patriarchy and to look at women's political activities as auxiliary and not central to national liberation.

African women in the ANC who had been denied full membership formed the Bantu Women's League in 1913. It was affiliated with and under the control of the ANC. "The function of Women's League during this period was to provide catering and organize the entertainment at meetings and conferences."[160]

The ANC expanded its mission fundamentally under the presidency of Dr. A. B. Xuma (1940—1949). It became a mass movement. This involved the revitalization of women's participation in the party. As a result, in 1943 women were "granted full membership status within the ANC with the right to vote and participate in Congress affairs at all levels."[161] Also formed at this time was the ANC Women's League (ANCWL). Its first president was Madie Hall Xuma. She was an African American woman from North Carolina with a master's degree from Columbia University (New York).[162] Forceful and determined, she moved to South Africa and married Dr. Xuma, devoting her considerable energies to the liberation struggle led by her husband. A key objective of the African National Congress—Women's League (ANCWL) was to "take up special problems and issues affecting women."

The ANC leadership, almost all men, expected the Women's League to focus women's political activities on "bread and butter" issues like "abolition of pass laws, better wages, and houses and development of family life."[163] It is worth stressing that the ANCWL "was set up within the ANC," and that it "was not an independent body, but a subsection of ANC proper."[164] The main objective remained the struggle against apartheid. This central focus had clearly not changed when, in 1960, African political movements and organizations were banned in South Africa.

In exile, the ANC under the leadership of Oliver Tambo, cooperated with the South African Communist Party (SACP) in organizing an armed struggle.[165] The military wing of the ANC, initially launched and organized by Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu, was called *Umkonto we Sizwe* (the Spear of the Nation). In its operations, *Umkonto we Sizwe* (MK) was "organized in terms of individual recruitment, and this included both men and women militants."[166] There were therefore female guerillas in the MK. This gesture and others that pledged equality of status between men and women in the struggle did not alter the fact that the leadership of ANC remained male dominated. The same was true of the MK. In spite of this, women continued to be active militants both in South Africa and in exile.

An important example of women's activism inside South Africa was the formation of the Federation of South African Women (FSAW). It held its first national conference in April 1954. The FSAW projected itself as a nonracial federation of women's organizations and individuals. All its affiliate organizations were members of the Congress Alliance that drew up the now famous Freedom Charter in 1955. On the surface, the FSAW represented a very hopeful sign for a possible nonracial future for South Africa. Yet, in reality, this was still a predominantly African organization. Its "membership was based, overwhelmingly, on African women."[167] This new interracial organization was unable to recruit large numbers of Indian, colored or white women.

Racism and bigotry conspired against "common womanhood." Colored women, for example, viewed "Africans as culturally their inferiors."[168] They were therefore unwilling to join a movement whose membership was overwhelmingly African, or one "that called for equality for all." The first and only concerted attempt at organizing a vibrant multiracial feminist movement was unfortunately a failure.

The major activity of the FSAW was its campaign against passes, which regulated the movement and residence of Africans in South Africa. But passes affected mostly Africans and, as a result, this issue failed to excite non-African women. "The campaign could not, on its own, rally women who were not under the threat of passes themselves. The FSAW thus remained conditioned by the dominant, colour-defined political definitions in society."[169]

By 1964, after the decline of the FSAW, the question of women's liberation in South Africa remained complicated as ever by race, class and the operation of the capitalist system. Indeed, "The overall lesson to be drawn from the FSAW's experience in recruiting members," Cherryl Walker accurately observed, "was that the interests of most black women and most white women did not coincide."[170]

The ANC women activists and militants, mostly African women, rededicated themselves in the 1980s to analyzing issues pertaining to women's liberation in the context of national liberation. Like their predecessors, they argued that "black women's oppression stems from apartheid with its preservation of the most repressive forms of tribal rule, its perpetuation of law codes that regard African women as minors and its denial to women of housing rights and adequate land."[171] This analysis, focused, comprehensive and clearly nationalistic, nonetheless failed to account for the class distinctions among African women. Did the struggle for national liberation make it imperative to sidestep these class distinctions?

As the apartheid system and its supporting institutions started to unravel in 1990, there already existed a steadily

growing African middle class in South Africa. The politics and consequences of national liberation would, in due course, expand the composition of this class. But by 1990, it was unclear as to whether women from this class, resident mostly in the urban areas, would continue to symbolically identify with the needs of South African black women resident in impoverished rural areas and shanty towns. It needs to be pointed out that in this case "discrimination is experienced in different ways,"[172] and that class interests could, in the postapartheid era, fracture previous racial solidarity. Would middle class African women now seek class solidarity with middle class white women to advance their joint "liberation" within the framework of the "market economy?"

Up to 1990, when Nelson Mandela was released from prison, the ANC and other nationalist movements had avoided structuring their ideology around women's issues. Women's liberation had yet to be conceived as an integral part of the national liberation. The theory was that it was "primarily through the main struggle that women will gain their 'rightful' place."[173] This position, the result of deliberate ideological frameworks, also reflected "widespread sexism" on the part of the male leadership of these parties. As a result, "in respect to gender issues, the move to incorporate various relevant issues into opposition activities has remained largely incomplete."[174] It is therefore fair to state that by the time of Mandela's release from prison, no liberation movement, including the ANC, had been able to develop a comprehensive and progressive policy on women's liberation. It appeared inevitable that the real struggle over women's liberation, in all of its multifaceted complexity, would begin in earnest in the postapartheid era.

Women have been determined and resourceful participants in modern revolutions. The nature of this involvement, as is made clear in this text, rarely involved actual combat. But does this general exclusion from combat diminish the value of women's several critical contributions?

It is worth recalling here that involvement of women in combat remains a delicate, if not controversial, aspect of war.

Thus, the developments within these revolutionary movements are a dramatic reflection of the enduring controversy over the proper role, if any, for women in the military and then in war. Examples of this controversy can be easily found in the experiences of women in the armed forces of Britain and the USA.

In Britain, "the barrier against women in combat roles stood firm" throughout World War II. This was in spite of the fact that "by the end of the war, nearly half a million women drawn from all classes, were in the forces." And further that "many were exposed to considerable dangers," which included spending "long years in captivity as prisoners of war."[175] By 1988, nearly fifty years after the end of World War II, this barrier against women in combat was still the guiding policy. By then, "soldiers in skirts could carry guns and use them in defence, but not in attack."[176]

In the USA, the involvement of women in World War II, was quite extensive. "All together, more than 350,000 women served in the military during the war, first in administrative or clerical fields, then in more nontraditional roles."[177] This figure does not include those women who joined the labor force in very large numbers during the war. The armed forces nonetheless remained uncomfortable with the idea of women serving in the military. At this time, and many decades later, the public or popular image of women did not include them as members of the warrior class. Not surprisingly, "at the war's end, only a handful were allowed to remain. In effect," observed the Honorable Shelia E. Widnall, secretary of the air force in 1996, "the Pentagon and Congress told them to go home and do the dishes."[178]

The enactment of the Women's Armed Services Integration Act by Congress in 1948, not only kept women out of the military, but also severely restricted the career advancement of those who remained in the armed forces. The act "restricted the number of women to 2 per cent of the total force and capped their rank at colonel, one per service."[179] This situation did not change till 1967, in response to the manpower needs in the military during the Vietnam War. Another contributory factor to the

change in policy was the women's liberation movement, which was particularly active in the USA in the 1960s and 1970s. "As women strove for equality, including full rights and responsibilities of citizenship, many young women were encouraged to sign [in the military]."[180]

In 1991, the Congress finally "repealed the combat exclusion law," leaving "the policies up to DOD."[181] In spite of the new policy, the military (and the country) remained hesitant in the 1990s in committing women to combat responsibilities. This was evident during the first Iraq war—"Desert Storm." The USA Air Force, for example, had over "12,500 women deployed." What did these women soldiers do? "They served in tanker, transport and medical evacuation aircraft. They worked as munitions specialists and in aircraft maintenance." But "no Air force woman saw direct combat."[182] There had been no significant alteration to this practice by the time of the second Iraq war in 2003.

Although generally excluded from direct "front-line combat action," women soldiers in the second Iraq war still faced enormous risks to their lives in the execution of their "noncombat duties." This became tragically evident in June 2005, when several of these women soldiers were killed and wounded in Iraq after "a suicide bomber hurtled his vehicle at a convoy carrying members of a search team back to their Marine base near Fallujah."[183] Part of the historical significance of this incident lies in the fact that "it was the worst attack of the Iraq war involving female U.S. troops and the deadliest for American women in uniform since a Japanese kamikaze slammed into the USS Comfort in 1945 during World War II, killing six nurses aboard."[184] This 2005 incident in Iraq revived, once again, the debate on the proper role for women in the military.

In the African revolutionary movements, as is true in other "insurgency movements," women were "encouraged to participate because their labour, skills and relative ability to move around unnoticed" were "needed."[185] On occasion, some of these African women revolutionaries were involved in actual combat. None-

theless, there still remained, as in other military engagements, "an ambivalence felt by most women as well as men, about women using violence in cold blood, or inflicting brutality."[186] As a result, "even when male-dominated fighting forces" accepted women revolutionaries "as fighters, they rarely" gave "them equal responsibility for inflicting actual physical damage on the enemy."[187]

The conclusion arrived at in this study is that the tasks undertaken by women involved "as much physical courage and endurance as actual fighting."[188] More often than not, there was "no clear line separating support from combat." These contributions must therefore be appropriately seen as being equivalent to combat in the revolutionary struggle. Consequently, it would be a grave error to cite these noncombat roles as a basis for the exclusion of women from postliberation political, social and economic power and their benefits. This point deserves constant emphasis since quite often "what any group gets (after the revolution) is at least in part a function of what that group is perceived to have earned by the blood of its members."[189]

Available evidence from the African revolutionary movements covered in this book demonstrates that not all of them addressed questions of gender equality and women's liberation with rigor and consistency. "Although women have participated in revolutionary movements in all societies," Mary Ann Tétreault has correctly pointed out, "not all of these movements addressed directly the problems of women in pre-revolutionary society or attempted to resolve these problems in post-revolutionary political and social constitutions and institutions."[190]

The drive for gender equality in the postliberation societies was affected immensely by the reality of poverty. The revolutions under study in this book took place in poor countries; members of what, until recently, was called the third world. It is hence vital to remember that in "discussing women, and gender relations ..., we do so in a context which assumes an unequal and exploitative relationship between North and South and distinct inequalities between the women and the men in different countries."[191] This

astounding inequality in income and wealth between North and South, affected the prospects of implementing progressive social programs in many of these poor countries. To be sure, the entrenched "exploitative relationship between North and South" was not the only obstacle in the promotion of gender equality and women's liberation. There were also internal and local factors. Still, the power of these local factors to obstruct and resist progressive change was an unmistakable reflection of the multiple effects of the operation of imperialism in these countries.

Chief among these local factors was the survival and resilience of the prerevolutionary social structure. Even in countries like Mozambique, where Frelimo, the revolutionary party, sought to create "an alternative civilization," the prerevolutionary social structure and culture survived. This would in turn pose a formidable challenge to Frelimo and its ideals. Part of the explanation lies in the fact that in almost every case no revolutionary movement succeeded in ousting all of the old prerevolutionary social structure and culture and implanting the new revolutionary structures prior to liberation. Liberated zones, remarkable as "laboratories" for the hurried and incomplete implementation of revolutionary ideals during the revolution, did not cover the whole country. Their existence was also short.

Victory was achieved before the society had undergone thorough revolutionary reorganization; the old social structure was still potent. It is therefore justified to argue, as Mary Ann Tétreault does, that "when an old regime falls relatively quickly, this intra-revolutionary conflict may be cut short." The result is that "those groups whose pre-revolutionary power was greatest in such a winning coalition, for example property owners or military officers," may "also dominate afterwards."[192] Prerevolutionary power and privileges can, unless vigorously undermined by reconstruction, carry over into the postrevolutionary era.

In some of these countries, e.g., Mozambique and Angola, the existence of externally well-funded counterrevolutionary movements frustrated the persistent efforts of the revolutionary

movements to institute progressive social and economic programs. There was an immediate and inescapable need "to fend off counterrevolutionary movements." And this development in turn affected the nature and pace of reconstruction. Also affected was "women's status in the longer term."[193]

A combination of inherited poverty from the colonial period, survival and potency of prerevolutionary social structure and, in some cases, counterrevolutionary wars, delayed and often derailed the emergence of a revolutionary culture. The new revolutionary society, based on gender equality, entailed the deliberate creation and then expansion of a new culture. This new culture demanded men and women to redefine themselves and to accept their "new looks" as part of the project to implement the ideals of the revolution. The importance of this revolutionary effort lay in the fact that both men and women had, to varying degrees, accepted and internalized gender roles characteristic of the old prerevolutionary society.

The process of creating a new revolutionary society and culture proved to be long, complex, laborious, and tension ridden. This was true even in countries like Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau, where concerted efforts toward this goal had began during the wars of national liberation. It was not easy to extract the new culture out of the old. The new egalitarian culture could not be simply ordered into being. As Sheila Rowbotham aptly observed, "We cannot bypass the long making of a new society simply by inventing a liberated female culture, intact out of time and space, unaffected by the society realities which exist around us. The movement between conception and action, culture and social revolution, is partial, laboured and painfully slow. But it is the only way we can heave ourselves into the future."[194]

Since the early 1980s, the fortunes, integrity, and even survival of these revolutions have been affected by the implementation of the theoretical assumptions of globalization. In historical terms, modern globalization marks the reemergence of "raw capitalism" systematically advancing its interests in "a no-holds-barred" manner.[195] Locally and internationally, "raw capitalism"

has consistently advocated "forcing down wages, breaking unions, eliminating state supports for workers and subsidies for consumers, the removal of barriers to the mobility of capital," and "the redistribution of income and wealth from bottom to top."[196]

In Africa, like the rest of the third world, the agenda for "raw capitalism" has been implemented through the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs). The design and enforcement of these programs remains the exclusive responsibility of the World Bank (WB), and the International Monetary fund (IMF). Mainly through these two Western dominated international financial institutions, "the United States has been promoting throughout the non-Western world raw, laissez-faire capitalism—a form of markets that the West abandoned long ago."[197]

Moreover, there is hardly any evidence to suggest that Western nations rose to economic prominence "under the rules being imposed today on third-world countries by the institutions controlling globalization." What is historically evident is that "The United States, Germany, France and Japan all became wealthy and powerful nations behind the barriers of protectionism." Likewise, "East Asia built its export industry by protecting its markets and banks from foreign competition and requiring investors to buy local products and build local know-how."[198]

Arguments about the impact of Structural Adjustment Programs and globalization on African countries inevitably draw attention to the nature of past and current economic relationship between North and South. Both characterize this relationship quite differently.

The West and its financial institutions have all consistently held that it is a factual error to argue that "the rich enjoy their privileges at the expense of the poor." More specifically, that it is a mistake to look at capitalism as a system "that thrives on injustice."[199] In this regard, *The Economist* recently stated; "The wealth of the wealthy is not part of the problem." And therefore it was quite possible for Africa to "produce and consume a lot

more without America producing and consuming one jot less"[200] under the current Western-dominated economic system. But why has this not happened?

According to a recent issue of the *New African*, the tendency by Western governments and financial institutions to blame Africa for its current economic plight is "just a diversionary exercise that masks the heart of the matter." The principal explanation for Africa's poverty "is that Africa has been involuntarily locked into an earnings logjam on the international market, which keeps it poor when it sells to others, and poor when it buys from them. Simultaneously, it has been swerved away by the promise of foreign exchange, from producing food and goods for its own use."[201]

On this question of exploitative economic linkage between North and South, Western governments and financial institutions have repeatedly exhibited a profound aversion to critical historical explanations. To them, "wealth and poverty emerge from eternity and toward eternity they march, and that is the way things are because God or custom prefers it that way."[202] It is therefore fair to conclude here that the oppressor and the oppressed do not remember the same past. What we have instead is what Eduardo Galeano refers to as "broken memory," in which "the memory of the North is divorced from the memory of the South, accumulation is detached from despoliation, opulence has nothing to do with plunder."[203]

Powerful examples of this "broken memory" can be found in a very brief consideration of the current debate on the politics of farm subsidies and tariffs. As part of the package of structural adjustment, African and other third world countries are required to open their markets to Western agricultural and industrial produce. "Wealthy nations justify pressure on small countries to open markets by arguing that these countries cannot grow rice and corn efficiently—that American crops are cheap food for the world's hungry."[204] What is not discussed is the phenomenal amount of subsidies paid by most Western governments to their farmers. Thus, "European farmers get 35 per cent of their income

from government subsidies, and American farmers get 20 per cent." Further, "Farm subsidies in the United States ... are a huge corporate welfare program, with nearly 70 per cent of payments going to the largest 10 per cent of producers."[205]

The practical impact of these huge farm subsidies is that they "depress crop prices abroad by encouraging overproduction." Tina Rosenberg's apt conclusion on this point is that "with subsidies this large, it takes chutzpah to question other nations' efficiency."[206] On the immediate question of "feeding the world," farm subsidies have been unable to make food available to the poor and hungry of the world. The reason: "Poor people can't afford it. The poor are small farmers. Three quarters of the world's poor are rural. If they are forced off their land by subsidized grain imports, they starve."[207]

Concerning tariffs, it is now plainly evident that the theoretical assumptions of globalization have not been implemented with unrelenting vigor in the North as has been the case in the South. There has been "hypocrisy of pretending to help developing countries by forcing them to open up their markets to the goods of the advanced industrial countries while keeping their own markets protected."[208] The North seems to fervently embrace globalization only when it has all the advantages to "make the rich richer and the poor impoverished."

Why is it critical for this study to consider the multiple effects of globalization? The principal reason involves the meaning of the independence won by these revolutionary movements, often after much pain, courage, determination, and sacrifice. The revolutionary activists and the ordinary citizens, men and women, who courageously supported wars of national liberation had very practical aims to achieve. They were not motivated, in these grueling struggles, by the need to defend the abstract elegance of an ideology. Amilcar Cabral stressed this point in a party directive issued in 1965. "Always bear in mind," he insisted, "that the people are not fighting for ideas, for the things in any one's head. They are fighting to win material benefits, to live better and in

peace, to see their lives go forward, to guarantee the future of their children...."[209]

National political independence "was viewed, even by conservative nationalists, as the path to redress the economic and social neglect and injustices of the colonial era."[210] It is this desire to "live better and in peace" and dignity, that provides the most convincing explanation for the masses' support for "nationalists and nationalism"; especially national revolutionary struggles. To this must be added the fact that radical nationalists, and revolutionaries, consistently "identified exploitation as the primary economic mission of colonialism—exploitation of the colonized people and their labour and resources."[211]

The struggle for economic freedom and development was therefore quickly identified as an integral part of the struggle for decolonization. Radical nationalists, and especially some of the leaders of the national revolutionary movements, understood that although the attainment of political independence was vital, "the exercise of this independence" could nonetheless "be considerably impaired by lack of economic independence."[212]

Even before the attainment of political independence, those revolutionary movements that "adopted a Marxist ideology as a guide to their struggle" identified neocolonialism as a serious threat to the consolidation of the gains of the revolution. "Bearing in mind the essential characteristics of the present world economy, as well as the experiences already gained in the field of anti-imperialist struggle," Amilcar Cabral pointed out to fellow revolutionaries, "the principal aspect of national liberation struggle is the struggle against neo-colonalism."[213]

Current globalization has to be seen as the flowering of unrestrained and even abrasive neocolonialism. This development has made it very difficult for these countries, having attained their political independence through revolutionary struggle, "to reap the economic and social benefits of decolonization."

This includes the complex struggle toward gender equality and women's liberation.

This study principally deals with a limited, though crucial, aspect of these revolutions: First, the welfare of African women in the revolutionary movements; and then the countries that these revolutions produced. What happened to the revolutions for which African women fought so hard and sacrificed so much?

CHAPTER 1

ALGERIA AND KENYA

ALGERIA

Algeria attained its political independence from France on 3 July 1962. This outcome was attained at a phenomenal cost to the society and people of Algeria. It is estimated that about one million Algerians died in the struggle; a staggering figure that was in itself the result of unparalleled colonial brutality and savagery.

Throughout the long struggle for independence, characterized by ideological splits and personality clashes, Algerian revolutionaries pursued two contradictory goals. "On the one hand, the revolution sought to bring into being a modern nation along socialist lines; on the other hand, the revolution sought to resurrect and restore a culture which the French were accused of having disparaged and disrupted—a culture that was essentially Arabic and Islamic."[1] In 1962, the leaders of Algeria had the ambition of instituting Arab socialism and cultural restoration. It is against this background, riddled with contradictions, that we must analyze the fate of women in postindependent Algeria.

The contributions made by women to Algerian independence were never denied by the men who assumed power in 1962. Nationalists and revolutionaries all praised women for their heroic roles and duties. Yet it became increasingly apparent that these leaders were neither ready nor capable of offering women more than verbal and routine acknowledgment. Indeed the roles that women had played in the revolution, while routinely praised, were nonetheless seen as unusual and extraordinary. "While many Algerian nationalists publicly acknowledged the important role women had played

in the revolution, they stressed the emergency nature of their participation."[2] This participation was the result of extraordinary circumstances and was therefore not normal or regular.

The contradictions inherent in the activities and responses of Algerian nationalists toward women reflected to a large degree the perspectives of Middle Eastern nationalists toward women during the era of colonialism and Western cultural assault on Muslim societies. It should be emphasized that the "status of women in Muslim society is an entity of faith (a 'symbol') and thus has implications for the religion of Islam as a whole. Whether the interpreters intend to 'modernize' women's status or whether they want to maintain or reestablish a threatened 'traditional' or 'original' order, they are in all cases dealing with issues that go beyond the women themselves and involve concerns such as political legitimacy, human rights questions, and the like."[3]

During colonialism, the "modern-nationalists" responded with anger and disdain at the Western charge that Islam as a religion was inherently oppressive to women. They "exonerated Islam from the charge of oppressing women and placed the blame on the failure of Islamic societies to live up to its religious ideas."[4] Partly accommodating some Western assumptions about the modern roles of women in society, these nationalists and intellectuals maneuvered to find an agreeable compromise. They sought to "develop a synthesis that would successfully preserve the structure of the Islamic family (and its gender roles and relations) and increase the social acceptance of women's education and work, which are Western indices of modernization."[5] Gender relations, especially in domestic affairs, were to be left intact while allowing women increased access to public affairs in employment. These nationalists and intellectuals looked at Western societies and saw a similar pattern. Patriarchy in Western societies was heavily entrenched, although this fact did not prevent women from pursuing some form of career life and attaining education. "Western modernization did not begin by extending the principles of liberty and equality to women. Even when the struggles of

women expanded these public principles to include women, the family remained as a social arena where patriarchy (and gender inequality) was firmly entrenched."[6]

In Algeria, the FLN on assuming power under Ahmed Ben Bella, managed to maintain its long standing ambiguity on the woman question. Ben Bella, given to dramatic flair, reminded his countrymen to treat women with respect and even on occasion threatened "men who harassed women on the streets with forced labor in the Algerian desert."[7] How did his government address the woman question?

One of the first requests that Ben Bella made to the Algerian women was that they should "donate their gold and silver jewelry to help the National Bank build its reserves, at a time when national currencies were measured according to the gold standard."[8] The women of Algeria responded enthusiastically, although as Marnia Lazreg suggests, there was no official account of "how much gold and silver was collected." Further, there was no official explanation as to "what happened" to the gold and silver collected. The women had again responded to a national need, i.e., duty, as defined by the leaders; and once again they could not see the concrete results of their sacrifice.

In 1964, the FLN government led by Ben Bella published the now famous "Charter of Algiers." This document should be seen as a general analysis of the problems of the Algeria and a broad outline of the new government's program. It nonetheless dealt with the woman question. It attributed the general oppression of women to "retrograde and erroneous interpretations of Islam and ... colonialism which led traditional society out of self-defense, to turn in upon itself (and so become, this implies, more conservative than it would otherwise have been)."[9] This document, full of general pronouncements with few specific details, perhaps reflected the general mood in the country.

On attaining political independence, many men (and a considerable number of women) were not keen to continue on the

social experiment of instituting gender equality. The "revolutionary zeal and their tolerance for social experimentation" seemed to be exhausted by years of struggle and sacrifice. For many men, it was time to settle down and resume their "normal life," which had been interrupted by colonialism and the war of liberation. "Securing a job, decent housing and continuing their education seemed the priorities of most Algerians after 1962."[10]

It was the consistent position of Algerian rulers in both the Ben Bella (1962-65) and Boumedienne (1965-78) regimes, that the constitution and institutions of Algeria provided women with equality and security, and that further agitation was ill-advised and probably foreign-inspired. One year after coming to power in 1966, Boumedienne addressed the women of Algeria on "International Women's Day." Algerian women, Boumedienne said, "already had the rights they fought for, and they should not therefore continue to 'demand' them."[11] He reminded the Algerian women that they should refrain from imitating Western-inspired feminism. "Algeria had its own traditions and that the emancipation of women 'does not signify' in any way the imitation of the Western woman. We say 'no' to this type of evolution, for our society is an Islamic and Socialist one. We are in favour of the evolution and progress of women.... But this evolution must not be a cause of the corruption of our society."[12] Boumedienne was, in essence, warning Algerian women from engaging in any further agitation. They already had what they had fought for. Now it was time to shut up and live.

In 1976, another national charter was issued. Like the 1964 charter, it elaborated on the ills that women suffered in society. But again the rulers of Algeria did not institute concrete "structural remedies" to alleviate the plight of women. "As in the previous charter, the National Charter was unable to fully integrate women in its conception of the new state. The ills suffered by women were recognized but unconnected with other sociocultural and economic problems identified in society at large."[13] The

plight of women remained isolated, not linked to other interrelated societal problems and issues.

The women of Algeria were given significant, though limited, rights in the new constitution promulgated in 1976. In this constitution, "Article 32 ... guarantees freedom to work to both men and women. Article 39 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and Article 42 specifically guarantees the protection of their political, economic, social and cultural rights."[14] These rights provided at least a theoretical claim to legal protection even if, as Lazreg notes, "such protection was not provided in practice."[15]

The participation of women in national politics in Algeria after 1962 remained a sensitive and elusive subject. Against all popular expectations, the election of women to local, provincial, and national assemblies was very minimal. In the "provincial 'elections' of 1989, only 26 out of 665 seats were taken by women. The number of women decreased by almost half in the reelection of local assemblies held in 1971. Women's participation did not exceed 0.5% while the female population was over 50% of the total population."[16] Without access to political power, women remained politically powerless, both at the local and national levels. In the national assembly, "The number of women, that have seats ... so far has not exceeded 10."[17] This development of exclusion of women from political power reflects the largely conservative and patriarchal outlook that the rulers of Algeria adopted after independence while still professing their adherence to Arab socialism. This was especially true during the long reign of Colonel Boumedienne. He chose to revive what came to be known as Islamization and Arabization of Algerian society. Under this strategy, Marxism was steadily but surely edged out of the national ideological discourse. Boumedienne used "... Islamism to counterbalance Marxist penetration into the state apparatus."[18] This strategy, clearly politically motivated, appealed to nationalism and cultural restoration while it evaded radical solutions to gender and class questions. What was the economic status and fortune of women in postindependent Algeria?

At independence, Algeria was eager to embark on an accelerated program of industrialization and mechanization. It had oil as its chief raw material and source of national income. Its economic strategy was partially based on socialist principles and dogma. Seeking to avoid the notorious trap of underdevelopment commonly experienced in other third world countries, Algerian leaders adopted a blueprint developed by "a French economist Gérad Destannes de Bernis. De Bernis's basic idea was to avoid reproducing underdevelopment by developing an industrial infrastructure. Heavy industry built at specific sites (*poles de development*) and using latest available technology would make possible the manufacture of the machinery necessary to the country's raw materials...."[19] To facilitate this leap into industrialization, the Algerian government (especially under Boumedienne) encouraged women to enroll into institutions of higher learning. The net result was that more women entered the work force as skilled workers. It should be stressed however that the overall number of women in employment has tended to remain small. "In 1966, about 34,511 women were working outside the home; in 1977 the number had grown to 138,234 and to 365,094 in 1987. According to these figures, the percentage increase of women having paid employment in the public, private and self-managed sectors grew 3.5% between 1966 and 1977, and 10.2% between 1977 and 1982. This number decreased to 338,400 in 1989. In 1990, women's participation in the labor force was less than 7% and it never reached 10% even at the height of industrialization under Boumedienne (1965-1978)."[20]

In the rural areas, an attempt was made by Boumedienne's regime to redistribute land and to provide electricity in the villages. However, the mechanization of agriculture edged women out of production and diminished their roles.[21] This trend was continued by the post-Boumedienne governments which while dismantling previous "socialist solutions" sanctioned "a greater privatization of the land, employing women as well as men as seasonal workers."[22]

The postindependent Algerian economic strategy did not seek to integrate women as a critical force to its success. The expansion of education and training produced a sizeable number of highly trained women that entered the labor force as skilled workers. However, as already noted, their total aggregate number remained low, and unemployment of trained women remained very high, much "higher than official figures"[23] routinely reported. The technocrats that managed this economy arrived at the conclusion that "women's material needs were to be taken care of by their husbands or fathers."[24] Men were therefore their focus. Men had to have jobs and employment opportunities in order to "look after their women" and reclaim their traditional patriarchal role.

The petro dollars that poured into the Algerian economy up to the late 1970s helped the government to undertake several economic projects and provide generous welfare benefits. These included "free health care, and education and subsidies for basic food stuffs."[25] In this "general climate of relative welfare," it was easy to underestimate the degree to which gender struggles had sharpened, especially as access to lucrative jobs diminished and unemployment among men rose steadily.

As unemployment increased in the late 1970s, and social frustration over dashed hopes arose, two crucial events occurred outside Algeria that had a critical impact on the whole country. First, when Boumedienne died in 1978, the economy was experiencing severe shortfalls in earnings from oil exports, which created increasingly severe economic problems. Second, there was the Iranian revolution. The combination of these two factors; economic deprivation coupled with an Islamic-based ideology that called for the establishment of an Islamic republic, created problems for the FLN-led government that it clearly found difficult to tackle using past methods.

It was in this environment that Islamic fundamentalism was born. The FLN government, terrified and unsteady, sought for an alliance with the traditional Islamic clergy in a bid "to undermine Muslim brothers." The chief outcome of this strategic alli-

ance was the passage of the now notorious Family Code of 1984. The government had initially wanted to have it adopted in 1981 but had shelved it because of protests from women. In 1984, the government pushed the code through, revitalizing women's militancy while at the same time vividly demonstrating ideological rifts within the women's movement and also within the general society. What does this code entail?

The 1984 Family Code essentially reestablished in legal form male supremacy in the home and society. In Nella Cordorelli's rather impassioned phrase, this code's "inspiration is, male title over women in every age of life, in marriage, divorce, widowhood, inheritance."[26] Specifically, this code affirmed polygamy, and also divorce, although in the case of a woman seeking divorce she may be required to pay "her husband to agree to a divorce."[27] The code also emphatically required women to "'obey' their husbands, 'respect' their in-laws, and breast feed their children if they can."[28] Nonetheless, the Islamic opposition parties found it 'insufficient' and unsatisfactory.

The reaction of women's groups to this code was varied and complicated by past history and current ideological struggles. It was organically linked to the history of women's participation in the war of liberation. In this war, "the majority of female revolutionaries, like the majority of their male compatriots, came from the small and middle class peasantry and not from the urban middle class."[29] These peasant women did not form a linkage with their urban counterparts to discuss the feminist agenda of the revolution. After the revolution no such linkage was pursued, and so, in essence, there arose not only an urban/rural split but also class distinctions within the women's population that complicated the forging of a general agenda for liberation. Class distinctions and a rural/urban split severely compromised the possibility of creating unified oppositional politics by women to the series of hostile legislations in the post-Boumedienne era.

By 1985, "a group of about 40 women—intellectuals, professionals, and housewives—formed the Association of Equality

between Women and Men under the Law. It took inspiration not from the National Charter or the Constitution, but from the African Charter for the Rights of Men and Peoples, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights."[30] These women believed that they had clearly defined rights recognized in the various national charters and "the constitution of 1976." They based their argument not only on legality but also on morality. These women and many others wanted the society to remember the roles that women had played in the war of liberation; that they too had paid for liberation with their sweat, tears, and life. "Women had participated, often heroically, in the struggle and that they had paid for their right to equality by the suffering they had undergone by the side of their men folk."[31] This linkage to past struggles and heroism was complicated by the fact that not all of the former famous heroines joined current struggles. Indeed, one of the agonizing realities of the involvement of women in the Algerian revolution is the apparent lack of sustained and continuous militancy on the part of some of the former women revolutionaries. Some turned away from militancy and agitation and assumed "their traditional roles" after independence. Djamila Bouhired, perhaps Algeria's most famous heroine of the revolution, resumed her life as a housewife after independence. "In her private life she is a good Muslim mother imbued with solidly nationalist values. After the war, she returned to her children and husband on Shakespeare Street in Algiers and became a housewife. She never pursued a career for herself but spoke wistfully of wanting to return to school when her children were grown up."[32] This case, and similar ones, did not prevent women protesters from linking their struggles after 1984 to the memory of the women in the revolution.

The post-1984 struggles essentially concentrated on six issues, namely: "the abolition of the family code; the unconditional right to work; the abolition of polygamy; an efficient protection of abandoned children; equality with men in majority age; divorce and sharing of common property."[33] These struggles

became urgent largely because the role of women in society became a central issue in the ideological positions espoused with increasing militancy by the main new opposition party, the FIS (Front of Islamic Salvation). The FIS has come to be identified in Western scholarship and media coverage as a party guided by Islamic fundamentalism. What does this mean?

Islamic fundamentalism is an ideological stand adopted by those Muslims who "insist on the 'static' and immutable nature of Islam as legislated in the scriptures. Everyday reality is judged as being right or wrong, 'righteous' or 'sinful'. The objective and absolute criteria by which this distinction is made are the eternally valid norms and laws laid down in the Koran and interpreted in the Prophet's Sunna."[34] Right and wrong and the criteria of arriving at these distinctions is valid for all ages and does not change. To fundamentalists, "social reality and social development have no influence on religion, while religion unilaterally shapes and guides them from above."[35] Since the Islamic religion serves as the guide to society and its institutions and social relations, it is vital that this guidance be recognized, and obeyed by all citizens in an effort to create a just society. Islam "as Absolute Truth, valid for all times, places, and nations, ... does not undergo or adapt to change. Even though it was revealed in human time, it is not historically conditioned by it.... The less society conforms to the ideal, the more urgent is the fundamentalists' demand for change and purification."[36]

In Algeria, as in many other Islamic countries, there has been a marked discrepancy between the theory of an ideal Islamic society and the everyday reality of poverty, exploitation, and cultural dislocation. This phenomenon of cultural dislocation and economic deprivation has created an environment that has accelerated the growth and development of fundamentalism. It is noteworthy that fundamentalism has generally tended to be an urban development with reverberations felt throughout the country. Some of the key supporters of fundamentalism have been young men "recently urbanized, disenfranchised, and aware

of the world at large," put in a "position of having to cope with modern life without the economic and educational endowments enjoyed by the modernists"[37] who control their country's commerce and politics. Shrinkage of economic opportunities linked to widening class distinctions and material affluence by the ruling elite and cultural dislocation exacerbates the anguish and plight of the male urban poor who then see logic and truth in the impassioned explanations of fundamentalists. "As they purport to quote the norms and guidelines provided once and for all time by the religious scriptures, these spokesmen's goal, implicitly, is to map out a strategy of resistance against the changes of modernity, perceived as cultural rape committed by outside enemies and their clients in the Islamic world."[38]

In Algeria, the FIS concentrated its criticism of national policies by essentially questioning the legitimacy of the government. There had been gross "cultural and religious failings of the society,"[39] and as such it was necessary to retool the entire society. The FIS offered as a model, "the early Muslim community established by the Prophet Muhammed rather than any past Algerian state."[40] This abstract though tantalizing rhetoric found reception amongst those "young, disaffected and unemployed men living in cramped households with no hope of improving their lives."[41] Both the critique and prescription offered by the FIS categorically excluded women. The "FIS members and leaders were obsessed with what they called *mixite*, the mixing of the sexes outside the family."[42] There was a suspicion that women fermented social ills (failings) when they mixed with men in public. And perhaps more menacing was "the specter of women seducing married men and causing divorces...."[43] On purely religious grounds as interpreted by the FIS, men and women had to be separated.[44]

In June 1990, the FIS "won control of the Algerian municipalities due to popular frustration and the lack of any relevant alternative."[45] This victory enabled the FIS to implement, even if only on local levels, its program of social engineering to be in accordance with Islamic principles. Gender separation in public was pursued

relentlessly. "Women were driven out of public facilities taken over by the FIS at municipal level, like recreation and cultural centers. In their zeal to create a single sex public life, FIS-run city councils banned New Year celebrations, public dancing, mixed marriage ceremonies in hotels, the selling of alcohol, and the presence of women on beaches, as well as numerous concerts and plays."[46] Teachers who identified with this ideological position targeted their students for "guidance." They "preached to children in classrooms that both of their parents would go to hell if their mothers did not veil or went swimming at the beach in a bathing suit."[47]

By 1991, the FIS was the government's chief opponent. Its doctrine of an Islamic society captivated the imagination of a sizeable majority of the Algerian people. It challenged the true Moslems to stand up. And many did, acknowledging the social ills that were attributed to deviation from the doctrine. "In a country where all people are Moslems, the FIS came up to dominate the political discourse by putting all other parties (more than 40 parties) on the defensive regarding their fidelity to true Islam and their stand on women's issues."[48]

On 26 December 1991, the FIS, at the height of its popularity, won the national elections. Two years later, the army "displaced the ostensibly constitutional regime of Chadli Benjedid to forestall an all-but certain victory of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS)...."[49] This action by the army further strained the relationship between the government and the supporters of the FIS who resisted, occasionally by violence, what they interpreted as an illegal usurpation of power. The period between 1991 and 1995 also witnessed some of the most vicious violence by both the government and the FIS supporters against women. In a very real sense, women became the "terrain of struggle."

In this struggle, the "veil" became a symbol of support or opposition. Although the "veil" or *hidjab* "does not pertain to the Algerian cultural tradition,"[50] it has come to symbolize the struggle for the future of Algeria. It should be noted that not all women are opposed to veiling. This is true even for those women

"who hope to leave traditional constraints behind."[51] Some women university students have been reported to be in support of veiling as a weapon in their liberation. These women students have argued that "women who wear the *hidjab* escape the male gaze and are therefore exempted from the dominant male group's ability to control social space by means of sexual harassment or sexual objectification of females. It was precisely their protective veiling, these women insisted, that allowed them to escape the traditional female roles of mother and wife in order to pursue professional, educational and social lives necessarily conducted in public."[52] What is clear is that in the 1990s, women in Algeria veiled for a variety of reasons that include self-preservation, religious allegiance, an effort to "attract a potential husband in a country where dating is difficult, while, others are clearly compelled by their families."[53]

The supporters of the secular FLN organized to become the OJAL (l' Organization des jeunes Algérienes libres) and harassed women who veiled. The overwhelming majority of violence against women has however been committed by various factions of the fundamentalists. These include the GIAC (Groupe Islamique Armè) and the MIA (Mouvement Islamique Armè). Why women? *Violence*, a UNESCO publication, has suggested that "it is through women that the opening up and development of society has taken shape. The fundamentalists cannot confirm their hold on the country without cutting women [down] to size."[54] The fundamentalists have also argued that women have taken jobs from men, and so this harassment and violence has been an effort to keep women at home and leave jobs for men. But as already noted, "the number of working women is virtually insignificant,"[55] and hence it is unlikely that the problem of unemployment can be solved by keeping women at home.

Between 1994 and 1995, some of this violence toward women had been taken to extreme proportions. In December 1994, "A young woman civil servant was kidnapped in El-Harrach, a working class suburb of Algiers. Her husband was shown her

decapitated and mutilated body at the morgue a few days later. Her torturers had sewn a man's head in her insides."[56]

The response of the various women's organizations formed after 1984 has been to denounce the fundamentalists and to appeal to the international community for support and solidarity. A basic issue of ideology and relevance has hence inevitably arisen. The fundamentalists have been quick to point out that these newly formed women's organizations owe their allegiance to the hated and despised Western values and especially to Western feminism. "Newly formed women's associations are prisoners of their modernist discourse of rights. In a terrain where the notion of right gives way to the notion of faith, they feel disabled, and reveal their cultural weakness as well as the inadequacy of their strategy, based as it is primarily on wresting the protection of rights from the state."[57] Some of the women that resisted the ideological prescriptions of fundamentalists have refused to veil, and some have openly worn Western clothing including blue jeans. Some have resorted to smoking. "To smoke is to signify one's status as an independent woman and to claim equality with men. The pleasure is greater and unmitigated if a woman is to smoke in public, instead of the privacy of one's or a friend's home."[58] Although now acknowledged as a dangerous health hazard, cigarette smoking is embraced as a sign of both rebellion and liberation.

The "modern" women organizations have however failed to rally the majority of the Algerian women to their cause. "So far the feminist groups have not succeeded in gaining active support from the democratic parties and groups and much less from secluded women. They have not yet presented alternatives that would address the problems affecting the overwhelming majority of Algerian women."[59] Marnia Lazreg has argued that these feminist organizations lack women versed in Islamic culture, tradition, and values that would be able to engage male proponents of fundamentalism on their interpretations of the scriptures. "A feminist fluent in the history of Islam and the Shari'a might provide a much needed perspective in a debate that has

remained exclusively male."[60] It is however not clear that to be versed in Islam necessarily leads to feminist resistance. Women can be versed in the Islamic tradition and still endorse the fundamentalists and their interpretations of the scriptures. In Egypt and in Jordan, for example, there is a growing number of young, educated professional women that go to prayers in Mosques and study the Koran. "These women in Islamic dress are becoming literate in the Islamic scriptures, even though they may be students of secular disciplines or young professionals. As they read and discuss Koran and Hadith in women's study groups, they take as their models the founding mothers of Islam, those women who participated in the early religious wars and were part of the advance of Islamization."[61] These young professional women, rooted in their allegiance to Islam, "emphasize the importance of the collective good over the benefit of individual liberation and self-realization; hence they neither entertain the notion of 'women's liberation' nor do they see themselves engaged in a struggle against men. Family concerns and their traditional roles remain centrally important to them."[62]

Two visions, seemingly exclusive, have emerged in Algeria on the woman question. "The conservative group is oriented toward Ryadh (Saudi Arabia), whereas the modernist group is oriented toward Paris (France)."[63] An inevitable agonizing question facing women of Algeria is this: Is to be modern to be non-Islamic?

By the end of the 1990s, the Algerian political crisis had yet to be resolved. Violence against women continued and there was no evidence of a coordinated response by women to these assaults and humiliations. In her study Marnia Lazreg suggested strongly that women should form an independent party if necessary to coordinate their activities and project their vision. There is a necessity "for women to create their own pressure group, if not a party, in order to impinge on the state's political consciousness."[64] This counsel, presumes a level of ideological sameness and clarity on the part of the Algerian women, which so far is not in existence. Algerian women as a group are not guided by a singular

ideology nor do they have a single vision of the desired future. There is also the danger of presuming that a women's pressure group, even if ideologically united, can induce changes to occur by independent efforts in a society hostile to the participation of women in the political and power structure. Can women act alone and induce consequential societal changes without forming political alliances with other aggrieved groups? Can the woman question be resolved in Algeria independent of other interrelated social, economic, and political problems?

KENYA

In Kenya, the attainment of political independence on 12 December 1963 left several issues unresolved. It was clear that radicalism and radical politics had been carefully edged out of national discourse. Jomo Kenyatta and his party, Kenya African National Union (KANU), championed a conservative and cautious path, avoiding confrontation with the West (especially Britain) and also with the former home guards and loyalists. Radical solutions to Kenya's social and economic problems were avoided. Kenyatta had been consistent on this matter. Contrary to an image created by the colonial government during the Mau Mau revolt, which depicted him as a radical communist or a "satanic heathen," Kenyatta was quick to "set the record straight" on the eve of his release from detention. In 1961, at Maralal in northern Kenya, he met the local and international press for the first time since his detention in 1953. He used this occasion to register his disapproval of violence and to denounce Mau Mau. He stated that he was not a communist and did not think that communism had any positive role to play in Africa.[65] At this press conference, Kenyatta also reiterated his respect for private ownership of property in Kenya and denied that he had ever advocated for the forcible or "compulsory expropriation of European lands" in Kenya. By the time of his release from detention on 14 August 1961, Kenyatta had managed to convince representatives of "world powers, lawyers, photographers, doctors, foreign visi-

tors, friends, relatives" that "after all he was the man to safeguard their interests in an independent Kenya."[66]

In the political campaigns leading to independence in 1963, Kenya's two main African political parties were KANU (Kenya African National Union) and Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU). Neither of these parties sanctioned a radical reappraisal of the Kenyan society and its social and economic institutions installed under colonialism. "There was a regrettable absence of any serious attempt to analyse the colonial economic and social system to see how this could hinder or frustrate the aspirations of the Kenyan people after independence. The singular aim of the political elite by 1963 was to inherit the state."[67] In their manifestos, these parties studiously avoided any critical analysis of Kenya as a colonial society. Their manifestos tended to "reflect the mood of the times in which they were formulated—hurried, sketchy, general and filled with excitement, but slim on analysis, reflection and comprehension of the options and strategies needed to solve the problems that lay ahead."[68]

By 1963, Kenya's political elite had essentially sanctioned the continued existence of capitalism as "the country's economic system." This system, installed under the specific circumstances of colonialism and racism, had been vicious in its exploitation of the country's resources and in the suppression of local revolt or opposition. The new political elite were eager to install themselves as the managers of this system and to reap the benefits. "When national independence was achieved the political aim of taking over the economy became merged almost imperceptibly with individual aspirations to take over the jobs, positions, and lifestyles which the economy made possible."[69]

One of the most important strategies employed by the new political elite to gain a foothold into the economy was Africanization. This was the replacement of expatriate personnel by Africans in the senior posts in the civil service and also in commercial enterprises (especially those in which the state had substantial shares). The government also pursued a policy of buying shares

in some local subsidiaries of international (foreign) corporations. None of these efforts was meant to contradict the government's consistent policy of encouraging foreign investment in the country. In 1964 the government affirmed this position by pushing through Parliament the Foreign Investment Act. This act "constitutes a bill of rights for foreign investors, guaranteeing freedom of repatriation of profits (in proportion to the foreign share of equity), interest and repayment on foreign loan capital, and abjuring expropriation without good cause."[70]

On the national level, the results of this linkage between the new political and commercial elite and international capital were on the whole counter-productive. These elite became closely attached to the interests of international capital, and "the results were monopoly of profits, high rates of surplus transfer, low increases in employment, and a falling share of wages in national income backed up by tight control over the trade unions."[71] These elite had inherited the state, attempted to Africanize the civil service and some industries, without alteration. But "to inherit the state intact was unfortunately to advance the aims for which it was so uniquely suited and created."[72] These were oppression and exploitation.

One characteristic feature of the new government was that it lacked any coherent and systematic policy on the "woman question." Women were not singled out for any special consideration in the formulation of government policy. The KANU government lacked any insight into the "woman question," nor were women given much attention in the official party and state documents that charted out policies for the state. The government instead held the view that women, like all other citizens, would develop as a result of general national and political development. Indeed, the government argued that its commitment to equality was evident in the constitutional provisions that guaranteed equality to all citizens.

Kenya's Constitution "guarantees right to life, personal liberty, protection from slavery and forced labour, from inhuman treat-

ment and deprivation of property, the sanctity of the domicile, protection of the law, freedom of conscience, of expression, of assembly, and association, of movement; discrimination is forbidden."[73] Women, like men, over the age of twenty-one can vote in elections and also hold elected office. "Every person who is registered in a constituency as a voter in elections of elected members shall, unless he is detained in a lawful custody, or is disqualified by law from voting in such elections on the ground of his having been reported guilty of such an offence by the court trying an election petition, be entitled to vote in that constituency in accordance with the law; and no other person may so vote."[74]

Women are directly affected by the citizenship clauses in the Constitution. The many provisions for citizenship include those for foreign women married to Kenya citizens. "Any woman who has been married to a citizen of Kenya shall be entitled, upon making application in such manner as may be prescribed by or under Act of Parliament, be registered as a citizen of Kenya."[75]

These constitutional clauses guaranteeing equality of men and women in legal and political matters have however been unable to protect women from gender-based discrimination in employment, law, and inheritance. "Kenya law does not protect women from gender based discrimination," nor does it force the president or his government "to appoint women to leadership positions, or to counter gender imbalances by way of affirmative action."[76] Since 1963, the government has held the view that it was possible to achieve rapid development that would benefit the majority of the citizens without restructuring the economy or even embracing a genuinely egalitarian political ideology.

In 1965, the government announced that its development policies would henceforth be guided by "African socialism." This was published as Sessional Paper no. 10 and introduced to the Parliament on 4 May 1965 by Tom Mboya, a key government minister. This document, "is one of the clearest declarations published anywhere of what a nation stands for and where it is going, and it is one of the three pillars on which Kenya is founded, the

other two being the KANU Manifesto of 1963 and the Constitution."[77] What were the provisions of this document?

Mboya, on behalf of the KANU and the government, argued that African socialism would "draw particularly on those African roots that are especially among all tribes in Kenya: political democracy and mutual responsibility."[78] The government, Mboya stated, would encourage and tolerate private ownership of land and property, but in accordance with African socialism, the government had a duty "to plan and control how resources were used. To imagine, however, that the use of resources can only be controlled through their ownership or that the appropriate ownership will guarantee the proper use of productive assets are errors of great magnitude."[79] The government would intervene in the economy through economic plans to ensure that a key element of African socialism was adhered to: "that no matter who owned or managed land or other productive resources, they were expected to be used for the general welfare. No individual family or clan could treat productive assets as private property unless the uses on which those assets were put were regarded as consonant with the general welfare."[80]

In what was clearly an astounding claim, Mboya confidently asserted that African socialism would prevent the emergence of antagonistic social classes. Here are his own words: "African socialism must be designed to prevent the emergence of antagonistic classes among Africans and must eliminate through its Africanisation Programme the sharp economic differentials that now exist among the races in our country. The concept of political equality in Africa rules out in principle the use of economic power as a political base."[81]

In this long and elaborate speech, and also in the Sessional Paper no. 10 document, there is no specific mention of the "woman question" nor of gender relations and their impact on society. Women, as a group, constituted the invisible majority.

In national politics, the ruling male elite customarily and routinely acknowledged the role that women had played in the nationalist politics. This mention was for propaganda purposes. It was not translated into programs or policies aimed at liberating women or improving their political and economic fortunes. It was also to appeal to women as voters, since by 1963 women constituted "the largest block of voters in Kenya."[82] This had increased to about 60 per cent by the time Daniel Arap Moi assumed the presidency in 1978.

This considerable majority of voters did not result in large numbers of women as elected members of Parliament. Parliament and parliamentary politics in Kenya have generally remained a male preserve. "Between 1963 and 1969 there was not a single woman member of Parliament. It was in November 1969, that the first woman was elected into the National Assembly and one was nominated to sit in that August legislative body, along with eleven male nominated members."[83] Without adequate representation in Parliament, women found themselves excluded from decision making and hence unable to influence national policy. "Kenya's record of women's participation in politics and decision making," Maria Nzomo has stated with justifiable anger, "is pathetic by any standards."[84] Women's representation improved during the 1974-1979 period, but at no time were they even a sizeable minority in Parliament. "From 1983 to the present, we have had two female members of Parliament as compared to 198 male members. Thirty-two years from independence therefore, we can only boast of having had a total of 10 women elected into Parliament. The number is quite insignificant considering the fact that women are over 51% of the total Kenyan population."[85]

Women's representation in cabinet appointments has been even "more pathetic." In 1974, a woman was appointed as an assistant minister for culture and social services. This remained the highest position attained by a woman in public service until May, 1995 when Mrs. Nyiva Mwendwa was appointed by the president "as the first woman cabinet minister in Kenya...."[86] As

late as 1996, there was no woman provincial commissioner nor district commissioner. The army, police, prisons, civil service, public universities, and the judiciary were all headed by men with a few women in midlevel positions. In all, it is true that "although suffrage and the right to run for office were made universal in 1963, Kenyan women rarely have taken a central role in the formal political structure of their nation."[87]

In economic matters, the roles that Kenyan rural women play, although critical, have generally not been included in standard measures of national activity. This phenomenon, it should be stressed, is common in most of Africa. "Part of the problem is that much of women's labour is not even calculated in standard measure of economic activity. Most food they grow is consumed by their families or sold on the informal market. Only cash or export crops, largely controlled by men, tend to be counted as part of a nation's wealth."[88] Women's economic activities, central to household survival, are neglected and deemed noneconomic. The net result is that, in the allocation of national resources, these women farmers, processors, and traders are excluded from consideration. "Seventy per cent of Africa's agricultural workers are female, as are more than 90% per cent of its processors of staple foods. Women also handle most marketing. This labour goes virtually uncounted by those who draft agricultural policy and allocate resources."[89]

In Kenya, part of the problem is that women's access to land has been curtailed considerably since 1963, continuing a trend that came into being under colonial rule. Land continues to be the central factor in Kenya's political economy. Most women in Kenya live in the rural areas. "Some 87 per cent of Kenyan women live in the countryside, and most of them work the land. Women farmers provide three quarters of the labour on small holdings, and half the work to produce cash crops. Women also contribute 95 per cent of the labour needed for family and household maintenance."[90]

Most customary traditions and laws of inheritance in Kenya exclude women from inheriting land—the principal national

asset. This exclusion is based on the belief and practice that "the husband will inherit the land and hold it in trust for the family.... In the event of death of a male owner, the land is passed to his eldest son."[91] It is rare for girls to inherit land from their fathers. Sons are the designated heirs to their father's land. Recent legislations, including the Law of Succession Act, have not caused any fundamental changes to this practice. "The exclusion from ownership translates into a lack of access for women to income from the sale of their crops. As a policy matter, decided by cooperatives and the government, income from cash crops is only distributed to the registered owners."[92]

The employment of women in the nonagricultural sectors of the economy has been largely determined by their access to education and their attainment of competitive qualifications. On average, the illiteracy rate among women is higher than that of men. In 1990, the illiteracy rate for women fifteen to twenty-four years old was 13.9 per cent (men, 8.1 per cent); while the illiteracy rate for women twenty-five years and older was 54.2 per cent (men, 26.0 per cent).[93] This disparity in literacy affects access to advanced training and acquisition of certificates and diplomas needed for profitable employment in the cash economy. In the rural areas, where poverty is a dominant reality, parents are sometimes forced to educate boys and not girls. In some households, girls are forced to stay home to help in domestic chores.

The decision to educate boys, and not girls, is reached on the presumption that "boys are regarded as future heirs and as a more reliable economic investment in these predominantly patrilineal societies. The most that can be expected from a girl is a part of her salary, usually before marriage and bride-wealth on marriage. It is assumed that by her education a girl will enrich her husband's family rather than her parents."[94]

The enrollment of girls and boys in primary (elementary) schools reached near parity by 1990. In high schools, by 1980, girls' enrollment stood at 32 per cent as compared with boys which stood at 42.7 per cent.[95] In her studies, Chesaina noted

that in reading these enrollment percentages we should realize that "there are fewer places available for girls in secondary schools than boys."[96] There is also a higher dropout rate for girls than boys, especially "during or at the end of primary school." Some girls drop out "to enable parents to cope with the financial demands of the son's education"; while others drop out because of low expectations. Still others drop out "of upper primary school as a result of premarital pregnancies."[97]

In spite of these constraints, some women have acquired superior qualifications and are represented in most professions in the country. Compared with men their number is small. "A very small privileged minority of Kenyan women hold positions in the modern sector. Estimates of the percentage of women who were involved in any wage labor as of 1976 was 16 per cent of the total. Clearly, even fewer women could be classified as white collar or skilled labourers."[98] Men in Kenya, like in other Commonwealth countries studied by Rhoda E. Howard, "dominate clerical work." Further, men are overrepresented in "formal domestic service," which "also tends to be a male occupational category."[99]

In the more intimate yet public matters of marriage and divorce, it is worth noting that Kenya does not have "a uniform statutory code."[100] There are four legal codes under which marriage and divorce can be contracted in Kenya. These four codes (systems) are "the Statute law, Customary law, Hindu law, and Islamic law. The Statute law in many ways resembles the English family law."[101] An individual can choose to register his or her marriage under any of these systems. The existence of these four systems, however, presents several problems and challenges.

Under Customary law, "a person can marry as many wives as he desires,"[102] and no provision exists under the system to enforce monogamous unions. The details and requirements of Customary law vary considerably from one ethnic group to another. As a result, there is no one standard Customary law code but rather various versions that reflect the number of ethnic groups. Since details differ from one Customary law to another, complications

can arise (and have arisen) if two Kenyans from two different ethnic groups marry and divorce under Customary law. No provision exists under Customary law that can prevent people who do not belong to a particular ethnic group to "contract valid marriages in accordance with it"; and as a result, "it is submitted that Europeans and other non-Africans who have legal capacity to marry can contract valid customary marriages."[103]

Under the "Marriage Act or the Christian Marriage and Divorce Act or according to Hindu law," polygamy is forbidden. If a man marries under these systems (codes), he "loses the capacity to contract polygamous marriages actual or potential, under Customary law or Islamic law."[104] Islamic law allows for polygamous marriages.

The existence of these four codes causes confusion and leads to the exploitation of considerable women, especially the poor and illiterate, who lose in divorce proceedings. These women may not know the law under which their marriage was registered and what they are entitled to under the law. It should be noted that "under both Customary and Islamic law divorce is extrajudicial and no 'faults' have to be proved before divorce can be effective."[105]

The state of women in Kenya came under both local and international scrutiny during the Women's Decade, 1976-1985. Kenya subscribed to this decade.[106] This enabled local feminists and international scholars to focus their attention, even more than before, on the state of Kenya's women. The International Women's Decade was the result of resolution 3010 in the United Nations General Assembly proclaiming 1975 International Women's Year, to be devoted to intensified action to promote equality between men and women, to ensure the full integration of women in the total development effort and to recognize women's contribution to the strengthening of world peace.[107] After the notoriety of the famous World Conference of Women in Mexico City in 1975, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed, in resolution 3520, "1976-1985 the United Nations Decade for Women."[108] The three objectives of the Women's

Decade were, therefore, equality, development, and peace. In discussing equality, the United Nations elaborated that "equality is both a goal and a means whereby individuals are accorded equal treatment under the law and equal opportunities to enjoy their rights to develop their potential talents and skills so that they can participate in national political, economic, social and cultural development and can benefit from its results. For women in particular, equality means the realization of rights that have been denied as a result of cultural, institutional, behavioural and attitudinal discrimination."[109]

The United Nations defined development in comprehensive terms that went beyond economics. "Development," the United Nations stated, "means total development, including development in the political, economic, social, and cultural and other dimensions of human life, as well as the development of the economic and other material resources and the physical, moral, intellectual and cultural growth of human beings."[110] Development should pay attention to women, especially the "poor, or destitute," to enable them to play a central role in their country's development. "More directly, the increasingly successful participation of each woman in societal activities as a legally independent agent will contribute to further recognition in practice of her right to equality."[111]

Peace was viewed by the United Nations as encompassing more than "the absence of war." Peace entails respect by countries of the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and "other international covenants." The United Nations affirmed the following: "Peace cannot be realized under conditions of economic and sexual inequality, denial of basic human rights, and fundamental freedoms, deliberate exploitation of large sectors of the population, unequal development of countries and exploitative economic relations."[112] Sexual inequality and economic exploitation and oppressive social relations were determined to be antipeace and therefore antidevelopment.

In 1985, Kenya hosted the end of the Women's Decade Conference in Nairobi. Although women of the world could point to several areas of achievement and advancement during the decade, it was clear that there had been no discernible revolution in women's status locally and internationally. Women still faced daunting tasks and innumerable obstacles in their struggle for equality, development, and peace.

At the Nairobi Conference, the United Nations conceded that a major obstacle in the lives of women of developing countries was the poverty of these countries. "Ten years ago, when the Decade was launched, there was hope that accelerated economic growth, sustained by growing international financial flows and technological developments, would allow the increased participation of women in the economic and social development of those countries. Those hopes have been belied owing to the persistence and, in some cases, the aggravation of an economic crisis in the developing countries, which has been an important obstacle that endangers not only the pursuance of new programmes in support of women but also the maintenance of those that were already underway."[113] How did the government of Kenya respond to the International Women's Decade?

In institutional and organizational terms, the most important change in Kenya was the establishment of the Women's Bureau "to coordinate" women's issues in 1975. The Women's Bureau was set up as a "division of the Department of Social Services."[114] The Women's Bureau was set up essentially to coordinate foreign aid and donations earmarked by donors for women's projects. Over time, it became a sort of clearinghouse through which aid to women was channeled. "The Women's Bureau has now become both the effective focus for policies towards women and a major means of acquiring international funds for aid specifically directed at women. Such funds are welcomed by the government and, are relatively easy to come by, given the current Western enthusiasm for women's 'development projects' and a new object of Third World Charity. They also inevitably

increase the importance of the Women's Bureau as the agency for acquiring them."[115] The Women's Bureau is a small division within a department that is part of the Ministry Culture and Social Services, which some Kenyan feminists have referred to as being one of the "soft ministries"; ministries without clout or power in the cabinet. The Women's Bureau does not fashion or devise policy but rather implements directives. It lacks clout and resources and does not engage in analytical appraisals of Kenya's gender politics.

The establishment of the Women's Bureau was partly based on the government's intent to focus on the economic aspect of women's lives and to avoid the more controversial and ideological aspects of the "woman question." The Bureau's emphasis was on rural women, especially their economic improvement. The bureau has, over time, worked through the "Women Groups." These are voluntary women associations, organized largely in the rural areas with two main objectives: "a) to achieve social welfare functions and b) implement commercial projects."[116] These women groups are part of the *harambee* (self-help) projects, actively encouraged by the country's political elite.

These groups are primarily interested in social welfare. Here, they are concerned with improving "the living conditions of members' households and of the local community. A group may devote its attention to such areas as nutrition, childcare practices and facilities, or home improvement, for example, helping members to replace grass-thatched roofs with iron sheet or to develop water supplies."[117] In the commercial sphere, these women's groups are interested primarily in "income generation," and most rural projects in Kenya tend to be one dimensional, tilted toward "income generation." The emphasis has been on the "monetary output," and as a result various crucial aspects of rural life have been neglected. "Many of the institutions established in rural areas, for example, cooperatives, have been primarily designed as a method of increasing cash incomes.... The net result is that there has been a tendency to neglect other important aspects of human

welfare such as nutrition, public health, the family setting, community involvement, etc."[118] There has been no sustained effort to promote integrated and multifaceted rural development. Nor has there been a credible effort to involve efforts of rural women as part of the overall development plan. Rural areas are complex arenas. To imagine, therefore, "that all that is needed to effect rural development are a few well chosen economically sound projects" is, as Mbithi tells us, "naive and shallow."[119]

By 1978, only 11.1 per cent of Kenyan women belonged to women's groups. This figure indicates that the efforts of the Women's Bureau virtually neglected about 90 per cent of the Kenyan women.[120] On a regional basis, most of the women's groups are found in the Central and Eastern provinces. Membership in these groups tends to exclude younger and very poor women, thus leaving "well-off" middle-aged women from relatively prosperous provinces to dominate the women's groups. What kind of projects are these groups involved in?

Women's groups are involved in small-scale rural agricultural projects aimed at generating extra income. These projects, in themselves, are not the principal source of income for the members. These projects include, "Poultry schemes, grade cattle, bee-keeping, fish-marketing ... maize and flower cultivation, pig-keeping, and cultivation of pepper."[121]

A particular obstacle to the success of these women's rural projects has been the lack of coordination, particularly the lack of marketing. These women do not have ready, reliable markets, and as such their products often rot or are wasted. In one project in western Kenya, Rayah Feldman found that the women had "bought some dairy cattle which later died, and had cultivated large quantities of tomatoes and bananas for which there was no market due largely to the appalling communications between the women's place of residence and other areas."[122] These projects, therefore, tend to have, as Rayah Feldman tells us, "a marginal potential for affecting the lives of the women who were involved

in setting them up" and cannot be seen as the spark that will ignite rural development.

The nonagricultural projects, located mostly in rural or semirural areas, also aim to generate income. These projects include "consumer shops, handicraft production, small-scale sewing and basket work, milling machine, and a bakery."[123] These projects, even more than the agricultural ones, rely extensively on foreign aid and donations, and have not been successful in generating profit. None of the projects visited by Feldman, "appeared to be income-generating, without writing off the grants that had been made."[124] Access to loans has also been very difficult. In one specific example, the women of Mraru in Taita-Taveta (Coast Province) found that their decision to purchase a bus required tremendous patience, tenacity, and interventions from several officials before it was realized.[125] Raising funds was difficult and even when the bus was in operation, it did not turn in a sizeable profit. It is a project that demanded a lot from its members but gave very limited returns, as the members' living conditions were not substantially improved.

These projects demonstrate that women's groups, although politically expedient, have not been an effective medium through which to channel funds. They are few; scattered, isolated and not intimately connected to district or national development plans. They provide the illusion of government involvement in rural women's development, but in essence do little to develop the rural areas. The Women's Bureau plays the role of dispenser of illusions. "If the Women's Bureau is seriously interested in women gaining greater access to income generating opportunities, it needs to question whether handicrafts projects without markets, consumer shops without wares to sell, buildings constructed with government grants to set women up as landlords of cheap housing, exotic poultry projects, and other uncompetitive or unproductive enterprises—all affecting only a tiny proportion of Kenya's women—are really the solution."[126]

Do these projects empower women? Most of the labor on these projects is done by men, while women tend to perform the "traditional roles." There is, hence, the unintended emphasis on women being unable to do "men's jobs" and, therefore, reinforcing the old stereotypes. Even in areas where women do most of the work, it has been found that men tend to intervene in the production process and reap most of the profits. This is especially true in the production and sale of *ciondos*, Kenya's "supple basket twined in a spiral," which became famous in the West by being included as a prop in Woody Allen's 1977 movie, *Annie Hall*.[127] Women are traditionally the weavers of ciondos. However, as these baskets have acquired considerable commercial value, it has become very common for men, as "middlemen," to intervene and handle the marketing. Typically, "in rural areas it is now common for men to buy ciondos from women at a minimal price before adding leather fittings and selling them to international suppliers at a large profit. This process is leading to direct exploitation by some men and loss of control for women."[128]

The response of Kenyan women to economic and social injustice has been complicated by historical and ideological factors. So too, has been their agitation for liberation. The oldest women's organization in the country, *Maendeleo ya Wanawake* (Women's Progress) was organized, as already remarked, by wives of colonial officials. This history and its objectives, has stigmatized this organization as being conservative, reformist, and nonprogressive. It has avoided controversy and confrontation and aligned itself with the KANU (Kenya's ruling party until 1991). Most of its leaders have been women related to powerful government leaders. At one time, one of its well-known leaders was Jane Kiano, wife of a powerful minister in Kenyatta's cabinet. On the surface *Maendeleo ya Wanawake* has appeared to be a focused and well-administered women's organization with branches throughout most of the country. Yet it still remains an urban organization. "Although more than 300 rural groups are now associated with the organization, it is said to be dominated by a group of elite,

educated women who live in Kenya's cities,"[129] and who use it for individual advancement. Women's organizations in Kenya have, until recently, avoided discussing politics and their leaders have traditionally used their positions to pursue their own individual interests. "In fact *Maendeleo* and related organizations serve a crucial political function in Kenya: they represent and reinforce the interests and attitudes of female elites, and through their affiliations provide a network of contacts between this elite and others throughout the world."[130]

Most of the women's organizations in Kenya are small and specialized. They tend to be interest groups organized around specific issues that concern a particular group of women. More often than not, these organizations are also the local branches of specific international organizations to which they are affiliated. "There are now more than three dozen women's organizations in Kenya, all of them addressing the issues of women's contemporary status in a variety of ways under the aegis of the National Council of Kenyan Women."[131]

The involvement of Kenyan women feminists into some form of activism has arisen out of a sense of frustration with the position of women in postcolonial Kenya. There is a widespread feeling that women have been betrayed; that the male elite has not rewarded women for their involvement in nationalist politics, especially in the Mau Mau Movement. "One of the motivating forces for Kenyan women to organize around 'women's issues' has been a sense on their part that their efforts in the freedom movement of their country have gone unrewarded; the government has failed 'to live up to its promises.'"[132] The Mau Mau movement is held as an inspiration by some of these women activists. "The Mau Mau experience, they claim, taught women the skills and gave them the confidence to participate successfully in contemporary politics and economics."[133] It should be noted, however, that the involvement of women in the Mau Mau, as already analyzed, "took traditional forms," and hence "did not represent a watershed for African women."[134] Further, many of

the current women activists had little to do with the Mau Mau. The example set by the Mau Mau for female activism must, therefore, be analyzed more critically. There is the danger of ascribing to the Mau Mau realities and positions that are not consistent with historical evidence.

Beginning in 1991 women's activism for political and human rights accelerated tremendously. The period from 1989-1991 was tense and charged in Kenya. It is during this period that calls for multipartism and political pluralism became more persistent, challenging the KANU's hold onto power. Kenya had essentially been a *de facto* one-party state since 1969, when Kenyatta angrily banned Oginga Odinga's party, the KPU (Kenya People's Union). The situation had clearly changed by 1989. The Berlin Wall fell and Eastern Europe and then the Soviet Union underwent confounding transformations. In Africa, many countries accepted the principle of multipartism and pluralism.

In Africa, most of these political changes which on the surface appeared positive, were in fact heavily influenced (and in some cases guided) by Western powers. The West had an ideological interest in these transformations. The democracy that was supposed to emerge had to have a Western flavor. The West was able to achieve this objective by exercising a sort of economic blackmail. In Kenya, the prodemocracy movement "was greatly encouraged by policy statements from Western nations and the World Bank that in the future financial assistance would be linked to respect for human rights, transparency, accountability and democratization.... But whatever the opposition said had to be acceptable to a Western audience of patrons, benefactors and well wishers: 'civil libertarians', publishers, editors, journalists, academics, churchmen, functionaries of non-governmental organizations, Members of Parliament (MPs), diplomats, spies and other busy bodies."[135] The key test was that the prodemocracy activists "had to support the neo-liberal policies of the Western governments." They had to support capitalism (the free enterprise system) and renounce radical politics and policies. Their foreign

policy agenda had to denounce radical regimes, especially those categorized by the West as hostile and belligerent.

In December 1991, the Kenya Parliament, at the urging of the KANU, "passed the constitutional amendment repealing Section 2A" of 1982. Under this amendment, Kenya became a multiparty state, and several political parties were formed. The elections of 1992 were contested by many parties.

The era of multipartism had a profound impact on the women of Kenya. It "opened the flood-gates for women to openly air their views," and as a result several new women's organizations were formed, including: "the National Committee on the Status of Women (NCSW), Women's Voters League, Mothers in Action, Federation of the National Women's Lawyers, Kenya Chapter (FIDA), National Committee for the Advancement of Women, KANU 92."[136] The old established organizations like *Maendeleo ya Wanawake*, but more especially National Council of Women of Kenya, felt rejuvenated by these political changes and embraced the new activism. What did these women's organizations want to achieve? In spite of their specific and specialized concerns and interests, as noted by Wilhelmina Oduol, by 1992 women's organizations in Kenya had several common objectives:

(i) to mobilize and create solidarity with women from all over the country to enable them to discuss common issues of concern;

(ii) to build Kenya women's solidarity and common purpose in the democratization process;

(iii) to provide both moral and financial support to women candidates in the next and future elections;

(iv) to advocate, create awareness and spearhead activities that aim at eliminating all forms of violence against women;

(v) to agitate for the improvement of the status of women in all spheres both political, social and economic.[137]

To be able to achieve these objectives, most women's organizations convened conferences and seminars to sensitize their members and the general public. This is reminiscent of the "conscious raising" endeavours of American feminists in the 1960s and beyond. It is, however, the pursuit of political power that has been a major cherished objective of the majority of the women activists. To this end, the National Committee on the Status of Women (NCSW) and the National Council of Women of Kenya (NCWK) convened a meeting at the "Hilton Hotel, Nairobi, to identify women candidates and find ways and means of providing both moral and financial support to the aspirants."[138] This meeting was followed by the National Women's Convention on 22 February 1992. It was the "first ever convention of its kind in Kenyan history." Speaking at this convention, Maria Nzomo, a noted Kenyan activist on women's issues and a faculty member at the University of Nairobi, outlined what has become the general frame of reference for other activists. She gave details of the underrepresentation of women in the civil service and other national institutions. On the matter of women's representation in the Parliament, "she said that women should form at least 35 per cent of all members of Parliament,"[139] a figure that she argued would go a long way in changing the subordinate status of women.

In her other writings Maria Nzomo has outlined a two-stage process in the empowerment of Kenyan women: short term and long term. In the short-term strategy, she has urged for the participation of women in the electoral process. "Women should use their numerical majority as voters in electoral politics; their special organizational and mobilization skills."[140] Specifically, women should be sensitized to vote for other women "rather than men." How will this be done? Through the "strategy of 'unity in diversity'". Such a strategy will allow women to devise "a common vision," so that they can "effectively lobby for adequate representation in decision making positions and influence change in the policies and structures that perpetuate their subordination."[141]

The basic thrust of this strategy is for women to be included in sufficient numbers in the current system of politics and government. No women's organization has voiced an ideological challenge to the current system. The presumption is that if sufficient numbers of women are included in key positions, this can "tame and transform the system" sufficiently to be able to be sensitive to gender issues and demands. This is a problematic proposition. There is no evidence to warrant such faith in the ability of the political system as currently constituted to change simply on account of having more women in key positions. Since there is no ideological unity among all the women's organizations, it is unlikely that candidates will be found to satisfy the various wings of the women's movement. This strategy also presumes that women members of Parliament will be champions of women's issues. Experience from other neocolonial or capitalist countries does not support such presumption. "Many women who engage in politics," Rhoda E. Howard has written, "will not be interested in women's rights. Many will be interested in their own family, clan, or ethnic claims or in safeguarding their own economic privilege."[142]

In economic and policy matters, the women activists have called for the inclusion of women in the development plans. Partly in response to this criticism, the Kenya government for the first time included "a special section discussing Women, Education and Labor Force" in its *Economic Survey* of 1991. This does not, however, constitute a national policy on women.

Women activists have argued that all development plans must acknowledge the contributions that women make to the national economy and also allocate funds to women's projects. "No development policies or programmes," Eddah Gachukia has written, should be "endorsed or supported if they are either silent on the participation of women or vaguely define such participation."[143] This inclusion will "mainstream" women's issues.

In the context of Kenya, largely a rural and class-conscious society, this strategy makes an artificial separation of women's and men's problems in development, especially in the rural areas.

It also downplays the class distinctions within the women's movement. This class distinction points to different priorities and loyalties. With regard to development, "The problems faced by men are by and large those also faced by women; namely irrelevance of formal political rights in times of military or one-party rule."[144] Poverty in the rural and urban areas acts as a suffocating constraint on the aspirations of both poor men and poor women. "Clearly, all rural Africans, male and female, suffer from economic underdevelopment. Clean water, for example, is necessary for the good health of both sexes."[145] Admittedly, women undertake more domestic chores than women, and hence "what water there is, clean or unclean, is provided by women."

Social stratification and social class distinctions remain crucial obstacles in the liberation of women. "Mainstreaming" of women's issues in the current economic and political structure will not of itself liberate women. "Whatever the differential between men's and women's labour in a rural commonwealth Africa, the wife of a rich peasant will have more economic resources at her command than the wife of a landless or quasi-landless proletarian."[146]

Opportunities for development and liberation in Kenya are determined not only by social stratification but also by the rural/urban distinctions. Educated women in the urban areas, although faced with new challenges, tend to have better opportunities for self-improvement. "In the urban environment, the educated, professional woman will have many more opportunities open to her than the illiterate petty market trader or wage worker. In this connection, then, development issues and analyses of possibilities for the attainment of human rights cannot be separated from an analysis of social stratification."[147]

In their theoretical analysis of oppression and exploitation, many of the women activists have been very critical of African-tradition and culture. African tradition has emerged as the fount of retrogressive views and attitudes, as the depository of vice and undiluted male chauvinism. "The roots of negative attitudes toward women in Kenya," Chesaina has written without evi-

dence, "lay deep in the traditional culture. Women have always been regarded as subordinate to men."[148] African culture is hence the culprit, and so liberation and development must be seen as a movement away from this tradition. This analysis comes close to endorsing the colonial model that condemned almost all aspects of African culture. It also displays a phenomenal ignorance of the details of African culture and the impact of colonialism on this culture, especially on gender and economic relations. The educated female elite who summarily condemn African culture and tradition erect insurmountable barriers between themselves and the majority of the women who live in the rural or urban areas and do not enjoy the benefits of a "Western lifestyle."

The Western lifestyle that is seen as evidence of liberation is admired out of context without appreciating the gender, racial and class problems that abound in Western societies. It is also a strategy that makes it easy for the male elite and other enemies of women's progress to easily dismiss these activists as tools of Western feminists out to install a foreign lifestyle in the country. Without condoning vestiges of sexism and oppression in African culture(s), there is an urgent need to formulate a locally inspired feminist analysis [and theory] that articulates women's concerns and problems in terms and ways comprehensible to the majority of the women. "If African women are to organize in defense of their own rights, they may well articulate their struggle in ways that differ from those of Western feminists. But African women, like Western women before them, will have to confront the ideological and political as well as the material basis of their subordination before they can obtain equal rights with men."[149] There is an urgent need to build strong, durable, ideological, and personal bridges between the women elite resident in urban areas and the majority of the African women resident in the rural areas. "All said and done, it is the rural women who really matter and their success will be the success of the female lot.... Women must also transcend differences based on personality clashes, religion

and cultural diversity ... they must not succumb to the generally accepted view that women are their own worst enemies."[150]

Many of these activists have also appealed to international organizations to force or accelerate changes in Kenyan society. This must be seen as an invaluable tool. Its limitations must, nonetheless, be acknowledged. On the question of human and gender rights, Kenya is a signatory to many international covenants. But like many other countries, the government (and the Parliament) have either ignored the details of these covenants or selectively implemented those aspects that do not threaten "the establishment." For example, "The government has failed to promote or provide protection to its citizens as required by the covenants to which it is a party."[151] It is unlikely, however, that the government will be moved to radically change its whole operative ideology as a result of these appeals. Adjustments and modifications may occur so long as "the establishment" is not fundamentally challenged. A government that has been indifferent to gender issues cannot be forced into positive action based on international appeals alone. These international appeals are likely to have considerable impact if they offer support to a strong, united, and well-organized women's movement that has made class and ideological alliances with oppressed and exploited men.

By the 1990s, the women of Kenya still faced problems of poverty, discrimination, and violence. Of particular concern were the rape of minors, sexual harassment, "derogatory language employed by some public figures to depict women as inferior," unemployment, and diminishing access to land. Poverty of the majority of women had an immediate bearing on the living conditions of children and even men. Many of these women are responsible for cash crop and food crop production. They toil for very limited returns within the context of a dependent economy and a society that has increasingly made precise and sharp social class distinctions.

CHAPTER 2

GUINEA-BISSAU, MOZAMBIQUE, AND ANGOLA

GUINEA-BISSAU

The triumph of the liberation of Guinea-Bissau in 1974 was preceded by the tragic death of Amilcar Cabral in 1973. The war of liberation that he had led with illustrious distinction had also, in effect, liberated Portugal. The war of liberation in Guinea-Bissau, "along with Frelimo of Mozambique and MPLA of Angola, was instrumental in the downfall of the fascist government of Portugal itself."[1] The death of Amilcar Cabral, at a time of revolutionary turbulence, complicated even further the usual problems of reconstruction after revolution. He had been the revolution's guiding light and the source of the main ideas that propelled it forward. His death thrust the mantle of leadership onto his former assistants, many of whom had not distinguished themselves as revolutionary theoreticians.

The triumph of the revolution under the African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde (PAIGC) introduced immediate practical problems. There were administrative problems. The new (and old) leaders of the PAIGC had no practical experience at government administration. They had to direct a complicated government machinery whose basic structure was colonial and hierarchical. They relied in this task on thousands of former civil servants in the colonial administration. Many of these people, who occupied middle- and lower-level positions, had not participated in the revolution. They, therefore, had no immediate ideological identification with the PAIGC and its objectives.

The new government leaders had to gather data on almost every aspect of life of the citizens and the society in order to plan and distribute resources. They had to adjust to the new situation in which there would be no easy solutions and in which the process of administration (and decision making) would be more formal than was the case during the war of liberation. And above all, they had to come to grips with the massive poverty that affected most of the citizens. They had to deal with the implications that this poverty had on priorities, planning, and policy decisions.

This poverty, the result of colonial neglect and exploitation, meant that the new leaders had several emergencies to deal with even before launching and implementing their development plan(s). "Instant solutions are demanded, emergency measures applied and resources, already designated for other use, reallocated to plug the holes."[2] Preoccupation with these emergencies took a disproportionate amount of time and energy of the new leaders, "whose main task should" have been "to chart long range planning."

To alleviate a critical manpower shortage, the new government came to rely on select foreign personnel. These were usually part of the "foreign aid" given to the new state by foreign governments and organizations. Foreign personnel introduced their own problems. The new government had to fashion a framework in which these foreign administrators would fit. The government was aware of the "lessons from other African countries," which clearly demonstrated that "foreign participation, not only by corporations," can have "disastrous effects" unless they are "integrated into the overall development plan."[3] Foreign personnel can, unless fully integrated into the "overall development plan," derail the revolution. They can also have their own agenda that may not always complement the revolutionary goals of the new state.

In its policies on women, the PAIGC had been consistent in its advocacy of gender equality. The party always looked at the armed struggle as an inevitable transitory stage toward the building of a new socialist society. "And so it was that the concept of equality was integrated into the ideology of PAIGC at its incep-

tion, and then put into practice in numerous notable ways which would have been considered extraneous had they simply been responding to critical moments of the war."[4]

Unlike many revolutionary movements, the PAIGC did not create a separate "women's wing," during the revolutionary period. Its women cadres were hence incorporated into the general party structure whereby they were expected and urged to be the advocates of women's issues. The situation changed at independence. The Women's Commission was created by the PAIGC soon after independence. The Commission, led by ten women, changed into the Democratic Union of the Women of Guinea-Bissau (UDEMU). These women leaders "had been active militants in the armed struggle."[5] The charge of the Union was to mobilize women to participate in development projects, implement PAIGC policies, campaign "against illiteracy, prostitution, and alcoholism ... promote the organization of women's artisanal cooperatives as well as maternity and child care centers."[6]

What gender-specific changes did the PAIGC government introduce in the postrevolutionary period? All changes introduced in the society were meant to reinforce the concept of equality. The equality of men and women in rights, obligations and rewards was seen as the foundation of the new socialist society. Specifically, the PAIGC government sanctioned divorce as it had done in "the liberated zones" during the revolutionary war. Dissolution of marriage, however, was not to lead to abdication of parental responsibilities. As a result, "in order to ensure that a man's wife and children were not abandoned, the law established that a certain percentage of his income would go for the upkeep of his children."[7] All children were accorded societal and official recognition and respect. There was to be no category of "illegitimate children, whether they were born in or out of marriage." This was an important development. It helped in a bid to change social attitudes.

On the question of "wife battery," the new government instituted measures to protect women from spousal abuse. "A wife

beaten up by her husband can report the case to the Commission of Justice and if she can show marks on her body the man will be jailed immediately for a minimum of twenty-four hours. In addition, he has to pay a fine which goes, in part, to his wife."[8]

Some customs, however, remained difficult to dislodge. They were too deeply rooted in the cultural and social complex and, therefore, relatively resistant to the new political and social ideology of the PAIGC. One such custom was polygamy. Women in polygamous marriages could, if they desired, get a divorce. Nonetheless, the PAIGC was quick to realize that wholesale summary ban on polygamy as an institution would be difficult to exact. Instead, the party and government resorted to political education, hoping that this would lead to attitudinal change and the inculcation of new values. "But political education in itself is insufficient ... ultimately, it is the economy that must be changed so as to remove the conditions which give rise to these social practices."[9]

In employment, the new PAIGC government enacted legislation that "guaranteed that women's salaries will be equal to men's for the same job." Women were "also entitled to eight weeks' pregnancy leave and the same occupational health leave and social security benefits that men enjoy...."[10]

The representation of women in positions of crucial political leadership was not extensive. Although women were free to run for political office, they did not hold many significant political positions. This discrepancy between the official policy of gender equality and the slight representation of women in political leadership has inevitably aroused several interpretations and speculations. Some scholars, like Joshua B. Forrest, look at this discrepancy as an indication of the lack of serious commitment by the male PAIGC leadership to genuine gender equality and even to equality in general. Skeptical of the whole social experiment enacted by the PAIGC, and often cynical toward the aims and practices of the revolution, Forrest's appraisal of the postcolonial society is nonsupportive. He considers the UDEMU to have degenerated into "a social club ... centered in Bissau,"

where it "plays at best a symbolic role in perpetuating the myth that there is a genuine commitment to prioritize the progressive emancipation and equality of women."[11]

Available evidence, however, suggests that the commitment of the PAIGC to gender equality was consistent and genuine. A consideration of women in leadership positions must be seen in historical and comparative terms. "In absolute terms, the number of women in positions of leadership and responsibility was small. Still, given [that] the number of women previously involved in political work or [those] treated as equal to men had been nil, the participation of women cadres in the revolution was substantial."[12] By 1984, Carmen Pereira was elected "as President of the Popular National Assembly," and by 1990, "there were three women on the PAIGC's Central Committee, including Henriqueta Godinho Gomes, the minister of civil service and labor...."[13]

The majority of the women of Guinea-Bissau are rural peasants whose lives, to a large degree, revolve around access to and utilization of land. In this regard it is important to remember that "Post-liberation Guinea-Bissau in West Africa represents an exceptional case in contemporary Africa because access to land is guaranteed to all men and women who want to farm, either by indigenous systems of land tenure or by government decree."[14]

Prerevolutionary traditional customs that may have sanctioned gender inequality came under scrutiny and criticism during the revolution and in the postrevolutionary period. However, it would be fair to say that some of these customs continued to influence women's economic and social activities. "In more equitable societies like that of the Balantes of Tchugue, women labor in the fields and at home while the men, too, work in the fields when they are not hunting, fishing or constructing new huts.... Among the Islamized tribes of North and East, and the Fula and Mandinga, where in the past rigid social and religious structures left women both with the major productive role and in complete subordination to their husbands and the male village hierarchy,"[15]

gender equality had to be the result of consistent education to adhere to official policies.

Among the Balante Brassa, women "harvest their own fields of rice and peanuts" and engage in extensive trading. This gives them "budgetary autonomy" and, as a result, "they are able to use the profits from these activities to purchase items of personal preference or gifts for their kin (resulting in greater prestige for the woman gift-bearer)."[16] Even among "Islamized families" and groups, women enjoy a certain amount of "budgetary autonomy" through trading and cultivation of their own plots.

In general economic terms, Guinea-Bissau was, at independence in 1974, an extremely poor and underdeveloped country. The war of liberation that drove out the Portuguese, brought considerable destruction to the country. The Portuguese, in an effort to halt the advance of the PAIGC, "bombed dikes and dams. Moreover, they moved villagers away from their traditional *bolanhas* (flood plain rice fields) into strategic zones. This meant that the traditional rice paddies were invaded by salt water. Salt deposits accumulated because tidal waters went unchecked. Thus, after the war, it was urgent to rebuild the dikes.... Where dikes were rebuilt, it took years before rain water could leach the paddies of accumulated salts."[17]

The country also faced political problems, with varied personality and ideological disputes emerging within the PAIGC. Specifically, Luis Cabral (Amilcar Cabral's half-brother) as president, was accused of dictatorial tendencies and of having a concentration of excessive power in his own hands. He was also accused of having "killed the party" by shifting the center of activity from rural areas to urban areas and additionally of pursuing economic policies that favored urban residents and neglected or penalized the peasants.

By 1980, poverty still gripped the majority of the citizens of Guinea-Bissau. This fact, together with political tensions within the leadership, led to the army coup on 14 November 1980. The new

government led by Jao B. Vieira, a former guerilla leader, professed to adhere to the principles and ideology of the PAIGC; to respect the party's tradition and its "principles of democratic socialism."

In their book *Guinea-Bissau*, Rosemary E. Galli and Jocelyn Jones, are very critical of the PAIGC, its leaders, and its policies up to 1980 and beyond. They write about the numerous mistakes committed by the leadership in the name of the PAIGC that, in essence, retarded rural development and hampered national development.[18] It is instructive, however, that their analysis does not touch in any extensive way on the abominable nature of the Guinean economy at independence, on the centuries of colonial neglect and exploitation, nor on the very limited options that the new country faced by 1974. These very limited options had to be pursued while absorbing returning refugees, restarting the economy, outlining a new ideology, calling for gender equality, and quickly adjusting from revolution to reconstruction. All of these occurred in a small country still captive to the world capitalist economy. Portugal had steered the country into the capitalist camp for centuries.

Drought, and a drastic fall in the prices of Guinean exports (ground nuts and cashew nuts) aggravated the country's economic problems by the late 1970s. By 1980, Guinea-Bissau, like many other third world countries, was beset with severe economic problems, many of them related to external debt. In the case of Guinea-Bissau, these problems were viewed by Western external funding agencies as being the results of its socialist policies, "lack of democracy," and the lack of competent administration, in itself the result of "single party rule."

In its appraisal, the World Bank argued that Guinea-Bissau's economic problems resulted from the government's "ambitious public investment program that focused on the manufacturing sector, neglected agriculture, and resulted in a large external debt without commensurate increase in the country's ability to service the debt."[19] The World Bank also criticized Guinea-Bissau's "overvalued exchange rate" and "inappropriate pricing policies," which

"depressed exports." The country's public expenditures were too large, its state enterprises unprofitable, and its revenues evidenced no growth. Lastly, the World Bank noted with alarm that the country's debt was not only mounting, but also not being paid.

By the early 1980s, the country's appeals for external funding were continually rebuffed on the grounds that substantial economic aid could not be forthcoming without a drastic reversal of official policies. Specifically, the country had to embrace "market economy" or capitalism as an operative ideology. This was done in 1987-89. "The government ... presented a medium-term economic and financial adjustment program covering the period 1987-89, which marks a clear change of orientation toward a market-oriented economy."[20] This was part of the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAP) that was imposed on the country by the IMF and the World Bank as a condition for continued external funding and assistance.

The imposition of Structural Adjustment Programs on African countries by the IMF and the World Bank and Western governments was widespread in the 1980s. "During the 1980s, multilateral institutions and Northern donor governments pressured increasing numbers of African governments to adopt economic austerity—or structural adjustment—programs that emphasized cutting government spending and balancing exports and imports. The conventional wisdom was that such economic belt-tightening measures, though bitter medicine, were essential to economic progress."[21] What is a structural adjustment program? How has it affected gender issues in Africa? What has been its impact on Africa in general and, more specifically, on Guinea-Bissau?

The origin of Structural Adjustment Programs is deeply rooted in the economic hardships experienced in the West during the "oil shock" of 1973 and, to a lesser extent, in 1980. This period, which also coincided with the defeat of the USA in Vietnam and the triumph of socialist revolutionary movements in Africa, left many major Western powers obsessed with the idea of "recapturing lost ground" in the international arena. Economic

hardships and the perceived slippage in power in international affairs led directly to the election of distinctly conservative governments in the USA, the UK, and West Germany. These governments were "elected on programmes of economic austerity, designed to squeeze inflation out of their economies, even if that meant permitting previous unacceptable levels of unemployment and depressed demand."[22]

These economic policies in the West, pursued with particular relish and with a sense of "religious mission," had direct impact on the economies of the third world. Except for oil, most commodities lost their markets and value. Deflation policies in the West not only led to suddenly lost markets, but also "triggered a severe crisis of indebtedness which had been building up throughout the period 1973-80, largely unnoticed by the commercial banks, the developing country borrowers, and the international organizations for economic cooperation."[23] Economic policies pursued in the West at this time led to an unprecedented rise in interest rates and, as a result, "borrowers had to pay higher nominal rates on all their new debt, and on that of the existing stock of debt contracted on variable interest-rate terms."[24] These realities created a crisis situation in international financial institutions and multilateral agencies that had advanced loans to the third world.

Influential conservative economic theorists and monetary economists advanced, at this time, a new theory of assessing economic performance. This theory would later be known as "mono economics." It was, as John Toye mentions in his excellent critique, "an economics that was universally applicable—a unified set of principles from which policy prescriptions could be drawn and successfully applied in advanced and backward countries alike. In other words, if low interest rates discouraged saving in Germany, they would do so in Ghana; if tariffs reduced welfare in Belgium, they would do so in Bangladesh."[25] In this way then, the third world was subject to the same "economic laws," and would, with training and guidance, respond positively to "proper economic management."

A particular "enemy" of the conservative economic theorists was the state as an institution and an employer of "wasteful bureaucrats." The ideological thrust of the conservative movement in the West was to shrink the state and, if possible, let it "wither away." This ideological conviction saw the "state itself or state personnel individually, as self-interest actors, on par with self-interested households, firms, trade unions, etc." The state was the problem. "From this it appeared to follow that, once the correct (neo-liberal) policies were in place, all would be well because all the bottlenecks and rigidities would have been removed by the process of liberalization and deregulation. Here lay the source of the widespread, but mistaken optimism about what structural adjustment could achieve."[26]

In the United States, the Reagan administration came to power "on the back of an increasingly conservative middle-class base" and was determined to achieve four goals: (i) to defeat communism, through a vigorous process of "roll back"; then (ii) to "discipline" the third world through "resubordination of the South within a US-dominated global economy"; (iii) to thwart the economic challenge from the NICs (newly industrialized countries) and Japan; and (iv) to dismantle the "New Deal social contract between big capital, big labor, and big government, which both Washington and Wall Street saw as the key constraint on corporate America's ability to compete against the NICs and Japan."[27]

In the forums of the World Bank and the IMF, the United States used its dominant position to push for this conservative agenda, which amounted to the export of its domestic policy. Its domestic policy became its foreign policy and its values became universalized as being uniformly and eternally correct. The United States wanted greater access to the resources and markets of third world countries and identified the state as the key obstacle. In "rolling back" the state, "the aim was to weaken domestic entrepreneurial groups by eliminating protectionist barriers to imports from the North and by lifting restrictions on foreign investment; to overwhelm the weak legal barriers pro-

tecting labor from capital; and to integrate the local economy more tightly into the North dominated world economy."[28]

The Western governments led by Reagan's administration in the United States scorned all calls for international redistribution of resources and capital. "The South's demand for redistribution was actually aimed at making up for the failure of the Southern states to produce wealth. Thus, entertaining this demand by increasing aid flows would merely exacerbate economic decline rather than arresting it."[29]

It was the World Bank and the IMF that were charged with the responsibility of advancing and enforcing this conservative (and imperial) agenda in the third world. Although both these organizations would later argue strenuously that their Structural Adjustment Programs had been drawn up with the active participation of the local governments, the facts on the ground clearly contradict this claim. Most of the packages were "more or less ventriloquized by the missions, if not actually written by them." What conditions were imposed on those countries that accepted SAL (Structural Adjustment Loans)?

Most Structural Adjustment Programs had nine features: (i) currency devaluation, (ii) elimination of subsidies, (iii) cuts in public expenditures, (iv) liberalization of foreign trade, (v) restraint in monetary expansion, (vi) deregulation in internal markets, (vii) privatization of public enterprises, (viii) increases in domestic interest groups, and (ix) increases in producer prices for farmers.[30] What have been the consequences of these World Bank and IMF prescriptions to African economies, peoples, and women and children?

A characteristic feature of the Structural Adjustment Programs in Africa has been their continuous state of experimentation. It is not clear as to what constitutes "complete adjustment," "an adequate adjustment," or even "a final adjustment." Moreover, as Kighoma Malima states, "there appear to be no general and easy prototypes."[31] The net result has been to create a condition of

permanent experimentation in which strategies are abandoned, more demands made by "Bretton Woods institutions," with no visible evidence of success. The Structural Adjustment Programs have been based on this one central premise: "that the adjusting country should improve the living standards of its population and should participate effectively in international trade as an equal and viable partner."[32]

The participation of African countries in international trade as prescribed by the IMF and the World Bank has been mainly through the expansion in the production of cash crops to fetch foreign exchange. This foreign exchange is urgently needed to pay for the ever-expanding external debt that these countries have accumulated. Cash-crop production, therefore, facilitates the payment of debts and not internal development. This is in keeping with the consistent policy of the World Bank, which has been to discourage industrialization in the third world while advocating for expanded cash-crop production. This is Africa's "comparative advantage," which deepens the continent's economic crisis, erodes its capacity for self-sustaining growth; and reinforces the state of dependency. "Even if production of traditional export items could be increased," the *Adedeji Report* notes, "there will be no instant solutions for African economies. In the first place, flooding the market with increased exports would, under a perverse trick of supply-and-demand, lower the prices of these items. Secondly, most industrialized nations, the major customers for African raw materials, protect their own miners and farmers by putting a ceiling on imported materials or fencing them out with protective tariffs."[33] Over production of cash crops has accelerated the fall in world prices of these "primary products and thus a collapse in earnings of African countries" and, as a result, Africa's economic crisis has become even more acute leading to more visits by the IMF and the World Bank staff who then make more demands and write more "revised reports and forecasts."

No single African country has stabilized its economy and embarked on sustainable growth under the terms prescribed by

the IMF and the World Bank. Even Ghana, normally mentioned by these "Bretton Woods institutions" with satisfaction and pride, has not, in reality, outgrown the need for more SAPs. "Judged in terms of bringing about real debt relief, the Ghanian structural adjustment program has so far been a failure: Ghana's external debt rose from US $1.7 billion at the beginning of the structural adjustment in 1983 to US $3.5 billion in 1990."[34] There is no evidence of real economic growth nor of the economy becoming stronger and more self-sustaining. The level of poverty in both rural and urban areas of Ghana has not been reduced. "As for the percentage of the urban population living below the poverty line, the only figure in Africa higher than Ghana's 59 per cent is that of famine-wracked Ethiopia."[35]

The impact of Structural Adjustment Programs on African women and children has been distinctly catastrophic. Devaluation of national currencies has led to inflation and an erosion of "real income of peasants." This has accelerated the migration of men to the cities in search of elusive employment. The women and children are left behind. "The female population that remains in the rural sector often increases its workload, not only to fend for the family, but also to subsidize the wager earner in the urban area."[36] The emphasis on cash-crop production has led to food shortages. And this, in turn, has led to hunger and starvation in some countries. As for women, "in fact increased producer prices for cash (export) crops may negatively affect" them "by forcing them to spend more of their time on the cash crops and less of their time on their own crops, such as vegetables and fruits."[37]

The prices paid to farmers (and peasant producers) are supposed to be raised substantially under the World Bank economic formula. This is supposed to encourage production, to "correct the pro-urban bias in income distribution" and to "get the prices right." This strategy has not resulted in uniform increase in production of cash crops from peasants, especially since the prices of fertilizers and machinery, no longer subsidized, are out of reach for most peasants. There is also no substantial evidence that this strat-

egy leads to income redistribution in favor of rural population. It is not clear that the World Bank "pays adequate attention to the fact that many of the producers are likely to be rich landlords,"[38] who have been the chief beneficiaries of the price increase paid for cash crops. Removal of subsidies on "basic foods consumed by the poor" has increased the economic hardships of the most vulnerable sections of the society. Sometimes this has led to the "IMF food riots." Women and children are the most vulnerable, and their food intake has been severely affected. The vulnerable "do not have the resources to ride out a crisis nor the flexibility to adjust to new ways of earning a decent livelihood."[39]

A basic ingredient of the Structural Adjustment Programs has been the insistence by the IMF and the World Bank that African governments must balance their budgets. This has led to a drastic reduction in public expenditures on education, health, water, and the introduction of the concept of "cost sharing." This obligates the governments to charge for the services rendered to the citizens. The net result of this strategy has been the adoption of gender-hostile programs and values that have sometimes contradicted and canceled out previous gender-friendly programs. In the case of Tanzania, the SAP led to the dismantling of already established stable and admirable public health systems. This had been one of the outstanding achievements of *Ujamaa* policies under Tanzania's president Julius Nyerere. In the view of the World Bank, health constituted a "nonproductive sector" and, therefore, not an economic priority. "The declining budget for the Ministry of Health is not only undermining the achievements already made but is also affecting the health of the people in general and particularly that of women and children."[40]

On education, SAPs have generally led to the expansion of illiteracy and a dismantling of national public education systems. Insistence on "cost sharing" and "cost recovery" and "transferring the responsibilities for the construction of primary schools from the government to the people" has restricted the availability of even primary education in many countries. "The introduction

of user charges in a period when there has been actual erosion of real wages and real incomes has negatively influenced the amount and quality of education being offered to the children of the poor."[41] A reduction in public expenditures on education has eroded morale among teachers, negatively affected higher education and training of skilled manpower, and generally led to brain drain. This has led to the need to import technical manpower from overseas. And this has reinforced dependency and expanded the national debt. The 1980s and 1990s have been periods of extreme economic hardships in Africa. Throughout this period, the World Bank has insisted on its untenable theory that "external factors may have been less hostile than supposed and less culpable in explaining the crisis."[42]

Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of the SAPs, with regard to the future of the continent, is the absolute power that the IMF and the World Bank have over African countries. Structural Adjustment Programs have allowed the IMF and the World Bank to literally write the economic strategies to be followed by African countries. "By imposing the terms of adjustment programs from outside the SAPs undercut the development of national leadership and indigenous economic management capabilities."[43] This extreme power to micro manage the economies of African countries is the clearest case yet of an active and an unapologetic economic imperialism in the postcolonial era. It has compromised African independence even more than in the past, undermined local initiatives and offered solutions that have impoverished the majority of the population with no realistic relief in sight.

In Guinea-Bissau, the results of SAPs have not been impressive. There have been three structural programs between 1987 and 1993. Each of these programs has been closely monitored by the World Bank staff. What have these programs produced? The most remarkable and persistent outcome of these programs in Guinea-Bissau has been inflation. By 1995, prices were "projected to increase more than 50 per cent," in itself quite an unmanageable figure. "This level of inflation is a serious problem

for any country, but for Guinea-Bissau it is catastrophical ... it threatens to destroy the already exceedingly weak sources of fiscal revenues.... This level of inflation has clear negative social effects on large segments of the population. Inflation reduces the real wage and has negative effects on the distribution of income. The situation of the most exposed sectors in Guinea Bissau is already very bad and they cannot face further worsening."[44] Structural adjustment programs have accelerated the expansion of poverty in the country. The poor, who are the majority of the population, are called upon to make more sacrifices for a possible fruitful tomorrow. Yet, "tomorrow comes and more sacrifices are demanded of them."[45]

Structural adjustment programs have not in any way "rectified" Guinea-Bissau's economy nor ushered in an era of prosperity. It is still an exercise in elaborate experimentation. It is also worth noting that "the solution of Guinea-Bissau's basic economic problems, including a viable Balance of Payments, is still far away."[46] As the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) Report concluded rather gloomily: "The country will continue to be heavily dependent on foreign aid in the foreseeable future."[47]

With regard to women, it is fair to state that "today underdevelopment is the greatest obstacle to emancipating women. To go further, Guinean women must be freed from ignorance and superstition, have adequate medical care to plan families and avoid the waste of infant mortality, and be released from the drudgery of a marginal subsistence economy."[48] It is unlikely that these objectives can be achieved within the framework of the economic strategies imposed through structural adjustment programs. These programs have propagated gender-hostile values, and failed to "improve the human condition." But, as the *Adedeji Report* noted, "No program of adjustment or of development makes sense if it makes people indefinitely more miserable."[49]

MOZAMBIQUE

The story of the course of the revolution in Mozambique is a vivid illustration of the obstacles routinely encountered by triumphant revolutions in a world still dominated by imperialism and hostile to "alternative solutions." Mozambique attained its independence on 25 June 1975, after almost a decade of sustained guerilla war fought against Portugal (and its NATO allies). Led by Frelimo, the revolutionary experience, although challenging and demanding, had not prepared the Mozambicans for the degree of malice that the defeated, departing Portuguese inflicted on the country.

Frelimo inherited a shattered economy "in a state of collapse," which made it very difficult to introduce social changes that would institutionalize "the hopes of independence."[50] There was a massive flight of the Portuguese settlers and professionals, who abandoned their farms and jobs to escape "living under communism" and "native rule." This flight caused economic chaos in the rural areas that effectively led to the collapse of the rural economy. "The peasant economy depended on Portuguese wholesalers and shopkeepers whose trucks and stores ensured the exchange of crops for tools, clothes and a few other goods. The exodus of at least 90% of the Portuguese between 1973 and 1976 had a traumatic impact"[51] that greatly complicated the introduction of Frelimo's program.

It is worth noting that on the eve of independence, Mozambique had only about 500 medical doctors. These doctors, resident mainly in the urban areas, had no connection to the rural population. At independence, "less than 100 of these doctors stayed on," creating a tremendous challenge to the new government. In education, "the illiteracy rate, including that of whites was over 90 percent. Only one percent—about 80,000 people—had completed more than four years of school, and most of these were Portuguese settlers. In 1973, only 40 of the 3,000 university students were African."[52]

The departing Portuguese farmers and professionals often destroyed their property and residences. The technicians often "destroyed or paralysed machinery, sometimes simply removing a few vital parts. Usually they destroyed all the records and repair manuals."[53] These settlers also plundered the economy by transferring abroad as much cash as they could. "There were many cases of 'orders' for imported supplies that never arrived, and which were really transfers of money abroad."[54]

There were even more problems with the inherited colonial state administration. "Frelimo inherited a lethargic, cumbersome, bureaucratic, racist and corrupt Portuguese colonial state machine, festooned with red tape and special tax stamps to be affixed in appropriate denominations in specific places on a million forms and filled in for virtually every activity the citizen wished to take. It was nothing short of a nightmare."[55] Frelimo was thus faced with the immediate problem of how to "keep this grotesque monster going." Since Frelimo lacked sufficiently trained administrators, it was forced to absorb those bureaucrats that had served the colonial state. These bureaucrats ("petty bourgeoisie," and "mainly Mixtos and Assimildos)," were "rapidly appointed to middle and senior positions. People barely literate and with no office skills filled the positions beneath them."[56] Frelimo inherited administrative personnel of dubious ideological value and loyalty, and who, nonetheless, were entrusted with the crucial responsibilities of translating its socialist agenda into concrete programs.

In spite of these daunting problems, Mozambique did not degenerate into chaos and anarchy as predicted by the departing Portuguese. Under Frelimo, Mozambique embarked in 1975 on a courageous path of renewal and reconstruction in the face of external hostility and resistance and internal dislocation. "Few regimes started their work," Bertil Egerö would later write, "under more adverse conditions than the Frelimo government."[57] Frelimo embarked on the critical task of reconstruction in one of "the poorest countries in the world," with limited ready sources

of income and with a collapsed transport and communication infrastructure. The country's chief asset was its people.

Frelimo capitalized on the euphoria of independence. Mozambicans were grateful to Frelimo for having liberated them from the hated and despised Portuguese colonial rule. "For millions of Angolans and Mozambicans, the end of colonial repression was immediate cause for rejoicing. Forced labor, physical punishment and insults from Portuguese administrators were no more."[58] The most urgent task that Samora Machel and Frelimo faced at independence was to harness this general enthusiasm and to direct it into projects and tasks aimed at "restarting the country." For this strategy to succeed Frelimo had to maintain a heightened level of political mobilization that encompassed the extension of its influence into those regions in which it had not been heavily represented during the liberation struggle. Its twin messages of mobilization and national unity were specifically aimed at attacking and overcoming the damage done by colonial propaganda and practice. This colonial strategy had created "ethnic and regional particularism" and also portrayed Frelimo and its leaders as irresponsible terrorists. The challenge that Frelimo, and its leaders, faced was to expand its influence and ideas and to initiate programs that would improve the material conditions of the Mozambicans. Slogans alone would not sustain popular interest in the revolution.

By 1977, the country had largely stabilized. There had been no chaos. Frelimo held its third congress to discuss the country's future in more detail. At this congress, "for the first time Frelimo declared itself openly to be a Marxist-Leninist Party and asserted that socialism had to be the long-term goal for Mozambique."[59] How were Mozambican women affected by all these postcolonial changes?

At independence, Frelimo abolished the "dual systems" of "customary or tribal" law and "public law" as well as private and public agencies in law, medicine, and education. The "dual systems" were deemed inappropriate in a society that emphasized

equality and social justice. Consequently, the new constitution guaranteed the equality of men and women. Women had been an integral part of the liberation struggle and their contributions were recognized. Frelimo under Machel viewed the emancipation of women as an essential task of the new government. There could be no credible claim to socialism and egalitarianism if the women were not emancipated. Hence, "in the People's Republic of Mozambique, women are equal to men as far as rights and duties are concerned, that equality being extended to all political, economic and cultural areas."[60] Although categorical in its affirmation of gender equality, there remained some areas in which women were clearly discriminated against. The most obvious area was in "citizenship laws passed at independence." In Mozambique, the "citizenship law provided that a Mozambican woman who married a foreigner lost her Mozambican nationality, while a Mozambican man who married a foreign woman was entitled to retain his Mozambican nationality."[61] Agitation against this legal provision by women led to substantial revisions. Later versions of this law stipulated that women would "lose Mozambican nationality only if they do not expressly renounce the nationality of their husband which they would acquire as a consequence of marriage." It was also established that "Even if a Mozambican woman loses her nationality by virtue of the marriage she may recover it if she has no other nationality."[62]

The new constitution recognized a woman's "right to work." This "constitutional precept" was an acknowledgment of the fact that women constituted a substantial fraction of the labor force in both rural and urban areas. About 97 per cent of Mozambican women reside in the rural areas. Poor and often illiterate, economic and social circumstances have been a major drawback in their efforts to be fully integrated in development work. "Domestic tasks, including subsistence agriculture, carrying water and collecting firewood (which can take up to 14 hours a day), prevent peasant women from developing their full economic capacity."[63] In the urban areas, the government passed a

series of laws that protected women. It should be noted, however, that for these urban women, the major challenge remained to be "how to combine work with maternal and family responsibilities and duties."

Legislative Decree No. 2086 provided, among other things, that:

— The employer must not, without justifiable grounds, dismiss a worker who is pregnant, or within one year of her giving birth. If the employer violates this provision he has to pay an indemnity equal to the salary for the time up to the completion of the year, but never less than the salary corresponding to the required period of notice.
— The employer is obliged to dismiss, without regard to their professional qualifications, such workers as have injured the dignity of a female worker.

The Rural Labour Code, approved by Decree No. 44309, stipulated that:

— Pregnancy and giving birth are not justifiable grounds for dismissal; during the period of exemption from work because of giving birth a female worker cannot be dismissed even if there are justifiable grounds.
— A pregnant or nursing woman does not have to pay compensation for time off work, even if she leaves without prior notice.
— Without reduction in salary, she may interrupt her work twice a day, for half hour each time, to nurse the baby.
— Whether they already have a family or not in their care, women are exempted from overtime work during pregnancy and nursing.
— Women are exempted from night work and underground work.

With regard to maternity leave, Decree No. 37 of 1976 established that:

— During the period of maternity, the female worker has the right to sixty days' leave with full remuneration, independent of her civil status. This leave may be initiated at any time from the twentieth day before the probable date of childbirth, as shown by the Certificate of Pregnancy issued by the National Health Services.
— This benefit applies to all women, without exception, including those who work for the state or in autonomous services, in state companies, as well as those who work in private employment including rural laborers and domestic servants, whatever may be the kind of service.
— Maternity leave shall have no adverse consequences for the mother's work record, and shall not prejudice any other leave to which the female worker is entitled.[64]

The enforcement of these critical constitutional provisions was the responsibility of the Labour Inspectorate. It should, nonetheless, be noted that poverty and lack of opportunities for paid employment greatly undermined the consequences of these constitutional provisions. "... the laws cited above did not apply to the majority of Mozambican women, who were engaged in agricultural work on individual family plots."[65]

Upon assuming power in 1975, Frelimo was quick to realize that illiteracy was a major obstacle to national development and social transformation. This was especially true for women. In the national census "carried out in 1980," it was found that "in 1975, only 3% of women aged over seven years were literate; in 1980 the percentage of literate women was 15%."[66] Graca Machel, Mozambique's first minister of education, estimated that "between 1975 and 1980, the rate of illiteracy dropped from 93 to 72 per cent."[67] Why education? Frelimo and the OMM argued that literacy would free women from superstition, engage them in critical

appraisals of their circumstances and cultures, and integrate them into the revolutionary transformation of their country. Literacy was thus seen as empowering. This was especially true in the rural areas where most of Mozambican women reside.

A major handicap of the literacy campaign was limited funding. "While the constitution guarantees the right to education for all Mozambican citizens, there are insufficient resources to establish schools for the whole population. Schooling is therefore not compulsory."[68] In such circumstances, it was found that girls were discriminated against by parents who preferred to send their sons to school while leaving the girls at home to help in household chores and other duties. Even when girls were enrolled in school (and this became common after 1975), they were still expected on the whole to "help their mothers with housework as well as doing their homework." These added burdens sometimes led to "girls dropping out of school."[69]

Adult literacy campaigns for women in the rural areas encountered several initial difficulties. There were hundreds of men who resisted the idea of their wives being enrolled, and those women who felt that they were "too old" and then the husbands who feared that their literate wives would abandon them and "run away with educated men." These fears were further compounded by the fact that Portuguese was the language of instruction. But, as Stephanie Urdang states, "for most of the rural population, Portuguese is a foreign tongue."[70] Also, women came to these adult literacy centers after a full day's work. They were tired. Yet in spite of all these difficulties, thousands and thousands of women enrolled and persevered. They agreed with the OMM's assessment that education (broadly defined), was "the key to their future."

The general principles of legal equality and gender equality faced their most notable contradiction in the matter of civil law. In postindependence Mozambique, most of "pre-independence civil law" was retained, if it was not "in conflict with the provisions of the Constitution." According to this "civil code," women

"assume full legal capacity when they reach majority, which is fixed at the age of 21. It is stipulated that those who turn 21 acquire full capacity, thus becoming qualified to govern themselves and to make use of their own possessions."[71] This legal capacity was, however, severely compromised upon marriage.

If upon marriage, the woman opted for "community of property" or "community of acquired possessions," the "marital power was conferred on the head of the family." Alternatively, she could "opt for separation of possessions in which case the spouses have equality of rights and treatment." These distinctions, however, are rarely contemplated at the time of marriage, in part because the women "fail to realize the legal implications of the apparently simple act of marriage."[72]

The husband's power in "community of property" is the result of being the acknowledged head of the household. This position entitles him to make binding decisions on the disposition of family assets. "The law states that the husband is the head of the family and thus he makes all the decisions in relation to their common conjugal life. The man is thus the manager of the family possessions and also of the woman's own property."[73] By 1988, it was clear that this legal provision contradicted both the spirit and principle of gender equality as enshrined in the Constitution. Discussions within the party urged on by the OMM, pointed toward a trend that would "accept that the managing of the family's possessions be assigned equally to the husband and wife."[74]

Beyond questions of law, labor, and policy pronouncements on gender issues, both Frelimo and the OMM were faced with some intractable problems concerning traditional cultures. Were these cultures an obstacle to the revolutionary reformulation of society? Since the revolutionary war, Frelimo had been consistent in its condemnation of "reactionary values and traditions" that hindered individual and societal liberation and advancement. This was especially true of those "reactionary values and traditions" that obstructed, sabotaged, and opposed women's

liberation. They were identified as "polygamy, lobolo, initiation rites ... premature and hereditary marriages."

After assuming power in 1975, Frelimo continued its political offensive against these "reactionary values" and actively sought to discourage polygamy as a desirable form of marriage. Polygamy was seen as the clearest case of male domination and exploitation of female labor. It was seen essentially in economic terms. Frelimo promoted monogamy—"militant monogamy"—based on love between equals imbued with a revolutionary commitment to serve their society "and the masses." The social and cultural context that led to the emergence of polygamy, while acknowledged by Frelimo, tended however to be downplayed, as more emphasis was placed on the need to promote monogamous unions. Monogamy was preferred because it ostensibly indicated a relationship between equals. It was seen as being in keeping with the egalitarian principles embraced by Frelimo. But as Frelimo and the OMM came to realize, polygamy declined, but it did not die.

It was also found out that women often helped and even encouraged their husbands to acquire another wife or wives. How can this be explained? Does this amount to women weaving obstacles to their own liberation and perpetuating their own oppression? It would be simplistic and presumptuous to explain the actions of these women as being the result of "blind obedience to traditionalism," or because "they do not know any better!" There are functional material explanations. Sonia Kruks and Ben Wisner have observed that "it is not only the man who stands to benefit from the increased labor supply that a second wife represents. For the first wife, a second wife represents not only more agricultural labor for the household but possibilities also of reducing domestic labor, for example by taking turns in cooking or collecting wood."[75] Would legal abolition of polygamy lead to female liberation? Sonia Kruks and Ben Wisner are doubtful. While acknowledging that "Polygamy is an institution that permits the male exploitation and oppression of women," they

nonetheless note that "it is also part of the complex and deliberately balanced social organization that enables an impoverished peasantry to subsist, by reducing domestic labor time, and also possibly by spreading out risk."[76] As a result, abolition of polygamy will not, in itself, liberate women (or even make the men less oppressive). "Its abolition will be of value to many women only in the context of a full reorganization of the relations of production and reproduction in which both agriculture and domestic labor are transformed."[77] Furthermore, unless monogamy is accompanied by economic, social, and policy changes, it cannot, in itself, limit, reduce, or even end the exploitation of wives by their husbands. With regard to household duties and obligations, monogamous unions do not, in themselves, reduce female labor time expended on these chores.

Frelimo was careful not to legally ban or abolish polygamy after independence. In spite of its consistent and principled opposition to the institution, Frelimo did not specifically single out polygamy for legal censure. This indicated, in part, "that a certain degree of flexibility" was "contemplated with regard to the specific modes whereby 'structures of oppression'" were "to be combated and equality achieved."[78] This flexible approach endorsed divorce in general and, in particular, permitted "a woman to petition a court to dissolve a polygamous union in such a way that her husband can still be required to assist her and her children."[79]

It was, nonetheless, clear that as Mozambique's revolution came under increasing hostile and vicious assault, the work of the OMM and its various organs was disrupted and in some cases halted or derailed. This disruption isolated OMM officials in the far-flung areas of the country and hampered communication and interaction. In some cases, it became common to find that "local OMM officials themselves" continued to be in "polygamous relationships" and even approved of "lobolo and early marriages for their daughters."[80]

In 1989, after Frelimo formally abandoned being known as a Marxist-Leninist organization, it became a mass party. It opened its doors to groups and persons that had previously been excluded, and these included polygamists. "Frelimo justified this strategy by asserting that potential members should be analyzed within their own cultural contexts; if a man had more than one wife but was treating them all fairly, then polygamy alone should not be a prohibition against his Frelimo membership."[81] By 1989, socio-political pressures and economic hardships had forced Frelimo to redefine or modify its stand on many issues.

No aspect of the traditional culture provoked as much discussion and evoked as many emotional positions as *lobolo* (translated in this context as "bride price"). It has generally been portrayed in Western scholarship as the "buying of a wife" by an African man. This portrayal, incorrect and tragically simplistic, reduces the marriage negotiation to a mere economic transaction. What is the value of this tradition in African societies? Lobolo or its equivalent "is practised all over Africa, though in varying degrees." Commodities used in this enterprise are "cattle, money, foodstuffs and other articles."

Lobolo, in traditional society, "is a token of gratitude on the part of the bridegroom's people to those of the bride, for their care over her and for allowing her to become his wife. At her home the gift 'replaces' her, reminding the family that she will leave or has left and yet she is not dead. She is a valuable person not only to her family but to her husband's people. At marriage she is not stolen, but is given away under mutual agreement between the two families."[82] Lobolo was not "payment for a wife," nor was it the "buying of a wife." Indeed, as Mbiti reminds us, "African words for the practice of giving the marriage gift are, in most cases, different from words used in buying or selling something in the market place."[83]

Lobolo cemented the marriage and provided "the most concrete symbol of the marriage covenant and security," while also elevating the value attached to the woman as "a person and as a wife."[84] These social, economic, and even political aspects of

lobolo were all linked to the critical importance of marriage in African societies. "For African peoples," Mbiti writes, "marriage is the focus of existence. It is the point where all members of the community meet: the departed, the living and those yet to be born . . . marriage is a duty, a requirement from the corporate society, and a rhythm of life in which everyone must participate."[85] Marriage affirmed an individual's loyalty to his/her society and a willingness to contribute toward its continued existence through procreation. No marriage was considered complete without procreation: "Biologically both husband and wife are reproduced in their children, thus perpetuating the chain of humanity."[86] This was "a sacred understanding" of the role of marriage. It is, hence, important to understand this aspect of marriage in African societies before resorting to predictable economic renderings that often reduce African marriages to the "buying and selling of women."

During the liberation war, Frelimo (and the OMM) characterized lobolo, polygamy, and child marriages "as features of what was called traditional/feudal society, one that shifted the creative capacity of the people by subordinating commoners to chiefs, the young to the old, and women to men."[87] Lobolo was, hence, an obstacle to the liberation of women. Lobolo entitled men to posses and "own" women as "unpaid labourers whose entire output would be appropriated without resistance by the husband, who was lord and master." Lobolo made the woman a commodity. However, "unlike other unpaid workers ... she was a source of pleasure and she produced other workers."[88] This analysis, economic and condemnatory, paid little attention to the connections that lobolo had with the complex network of social relations and cultural beliefs.

After the attainment of independence in 1975, Frelimo (and the OMM) chose to condemn lobolo without penalizing its practitioners. "The strategy of the law was neither to recognise nor to penalise, but deliberately to ignore the institution. The state denounced but did not suppress it. Lobolo was not illegal, in the sense that no one could be punished for paying or receiv-

ing it. But nor at the same time was it 'legal.' The courts said, in effect, that lobolo was a social transaction that might have meaning for the parties involved and even for the community to which they belong, but that it had no legal significance as far as the institutions were concerned; thus the people engaging in the transaction did so knowing full-well that they could never use it as the basis for founding a legal claim."[89] The law could not be employed to enforce the complex traditional obligations associated with lobolo; for example, "neither husband nor wife could base a claim for custody of the children on whether lobolo had been paid or not; none could base an inheritance claim on the payment or otherwise of lobolo by parents or grandparents."[90] Many communities, nonetheless, continued to conduct their marriage obligations according to local customs that included the payment of lobolo. A parallel informal family law, hence, existed side by side with the new laws. In those cases where marriage disputes were referred to the courts, the "People's Tribunals," it was noticed that "the judges relied neither on the Portuguese Codes nor on traditional (customary law), but instead tried to reconcile the parties, and, if this failed, determined cases 'in accordance with good sense and taking into account the principles guiding the building of a socialist society.'"[91]

A solution to the lobolo problem proved to be stubbornly elusive in spite of spirited debates in both Frelimo and the OMM. These debates advanced four distinct positions, namely:

1. The conservative strategy which argued that "as an intrinsic part of the people's culture, lobolo should be preserved."
2. The abolitionist strategy defined "lobolo as a social evil, a relic of past feudal social relationships which has to be eliminated root and branch in all its different forms and ramifications, using the criminal law if necessary to achieve this end."
3. The regulative strategy looked at lobolo as not being intrinsically wrong and argued that all its abuses could be safely corrected by "imposing legal ceilings."

4. The neutralist strategy looked at lobolo as a set of values and practices that existed "outside the sphere of State intervention"[92] and therefore counseled against intervention from the State or its organs.

It was clear by 1987 that any solution to the lobolo issue would be a complex amalgam of these four positions. In their recommendation for a solution, Gita Monwana Welch and Albie Sachs, employees of the Ministry of Justice in Mozambique, proposed that "the State should make it clear that it encourages the protocol and feasts of traditional marriages, and that it permits the payments of small sums in terms of tradition, and that provided there would be no impediment in terms of the Civil Law, it recognises such marriages as producing most of the effects of a civil marriage."[93] This, they believe, would be consistent with the strategy of "preserve of what is good and reject what is bad." Further, they argued that the state should indicate the limits of its tolerance by, for example, underlining that "lobolo promises and payments would be regarded as purely matters between families and not exigeable in a court of law."

Most of the changes in gender relations were evident in the communal villages established after 1975. Frelimo had first established communal villages in the liberated zones during the liberation war. The rationale for their establishment was simple; they were to be the centers of the new revolutionary culture. "The new revolutionary institutions to be located there—party cells, schools, health services, the mass democratic organizations, a variety of craft and consumer cooperatives, and, above all else, agricultural cooperatives in which villagers would spend a portion of their day working collectively producing cash crops for sale—would transform relations of production, raise peasant's political consciousness, and improve the quality of their lives. The communal villages would also be the battleground on which the reactionary ideas of colonisation and traditional society would be vanquished."[94] At their height of success, the communal villages

accommodated about two million peasants, "close to 20% of the total population." Lack of capital and other critical infrastructure and resources limited their success and eroded their popularity, so that "As of 1982 the overwhelming majority of peasants living in communal villages were practising solely family farming, and only 229 of the 1,352 communal villages even had agricultural cooperatives."[95]

The importance of the communal villages to Frelimo lay in the fact that they were able to tackle, better than any other forum, the problems of traditional culture and their linkage to a socialist revolutionary society. "In communal villages, the inequalities of the colonial-capitalist system have given way at varying speeds, to new social relations and patterns of behavior."[96] Women were involved as equal members with access to literacy classes and healthcare. It is, hence, not surprising that the "battles to get rid of initiation rites, child marriages, polygamy and bride price" made "their greatest advances in communal villages."[97]

On an individual level, liberation for the Mozambican woman tended to have several meanings. On the national level, liberation was seen in institutional terms: provision of equal opportunity; removal of sexist barriers; provision of equal pay and maternity leave; and freedom to choose a marriage partner and to divorce. There was also the freedom to pursue a career and to engage in politics and assume political office and power. But liberation was also perceived in very personal terms. For some women (especially rural women) this entailed the family eating the same food and/or "eating together as a family." For others it referred to their husbands "helping in housework, including cooking," while for some it meant having their input in family decisions respected by their husbands. There was, hence, at this level, no singular all-encompassing definition of liberation. "What women themselves see as 'emancipation' varies widely both geographically and in time. It can be simply eating with their husbands. Or it can be the right to take jobs and hold responsible posts. Often it relates to equality in social issues like divorce."[98]

These societal and individual strides toward the liberation of women faced formidable obstacles due to the counterrevolutionary war perpetrated against Mozambique by Renamo (MNR) bandits. It was formed, organized, and sponsored by Rhodesia's government to destabilize newly liberated Mozambique, which had given refuge to "Zimbabwean guerillas fighting for the majority rule in Rhodesia."[99] When Zimbabwe gained its independence under Mugabe's ZANU (PF) in 1980, the MNR was not closed down. Instead, before majority rule went into effect, "it had been passed on to South African Military Intelligence." With the approval and support of the USA, the UK, and Portugal, South Africa became the local bully by increasing the profile of the MNR and, therefore, its destructive capacity.

Who joined the MNR? "Most of the fighters were young Mozambicans press-ganged into the guerilla force. Some stayed on voluntarily, liking the life of an armed bandit than the drudgery of peasant farming. Some tried to escape and many succeeded; those caught trying to flee were executed; which served as a strong deterrent to others."[100] Did the MNR grow as a response to the internal opposition against Frelimo? There was some internal opposition to Frelimo, and the party made some policy mistakes. Yet it would be absolutely incorrect to conclude that the MNR was a local force of opposition. It was an external force, formed and sponsored by Rhodesia (then more effectively by South Africa) and their Western allies. Internal opposition is universal. "Nearly all countries have ethnic, regional, or language minorities with legitimate grievances about their cultures being marginalized, or their regions being economically disadvantaged."[101] This is certainly true in the USA, Canada, UK, France, Spain, Russia, etc. Hanlon poses an important question when he asks: "Consider what would happen if a powerful and wealthy neighbour were to train Welsh, Basque, Puerto Rican or Quebec nationalists, and then drop arms and other supplies, send submarines along the coast to land instructors, send commandos to blow up railway bridges, and set up an international propaganda campaign to boost the credibility

of the new movement."[102] These countries would be equally vulnerable and hence subjected to death, destruction and even chaos. These "flash points" have not grown into large-scale wars because of a lack of formidable "foreign support," and not because of "any wisdom or skill by European or North American governments in resolving these problems."[103]

In its campaign of destabilization, the MNR "resorted to terrorism." This involved gruesome massacres and disfiguring mutilations "such as cutting off ears, noses and breasts." This tragedy was even more compounded by the recruitment of young children (as young as ten or twelve years) and ordering them to commit these atrocities, sometimes against their own families. "In numerous cases, Renamo would kidnap the entire student body from schools, raping girls and forcing boys to become Renamo fighters.[104]

Its chief targets were economic and social centers and the transport infrastructure. Villages were burned, which then led to massive displacement of people internally, while others crossed the frontier into neighboring countries to lead the precarious existence of refugees in this undeclared war. Shops were looted and burned; so were factories, trading centers, and farms. Schools and hospitals were a favorite target. Hospitals were attacked and destroyed, patients killed and raped or kidnapped. Health centers that catered to the rural populations were destroyed. All this massive destruction, vindictive and barbaric, terrified the population. Trains were attacked and so were buses. "Drivers and bus passengers were burned alive in their vehicles, or hacked to death with axes, in an effort to ensure people were too terrified to travel." Naturally, "the effect was devastating."[105]

This war, relentless and destructive, led to disruption in agricultural production and then in food distribution. In turn, accompanied by repeated droughts in the 1980s, this led to scarcity of food in many regions. By 1986 and beyond, almost half of Mozambique's population needed some form of food aid. The aims of the MNR (and therefore South Africa and its Western allies) were clear. The "alternative civilization" had to be

destroyed. It is in the areas of health and education that Frelimo had recorded its greatest triumphs. MNR strategy seemed to have been to "force a collapse of the rural health and education services" and thereby discredit Frelimo as both unable to deliver on its revolutionary promises and also unable to provide security for the citizens of Mozambique.

Women and families provided special targets for the MNR. Those women active in the OMM were "especially targeted by Renamo."[106] The social and economic targets of the MNR were, on the whole, those that benefitted women and families. Their destruction meant, in effect, that women were attacked on two levels: individually and socially.

In spite of these attacks, Frelimo continued to invest in projects that alleviated the plight of women. Provision of "labor-saving facilities" like "water points and grain-mills" continued even if these were likely to be attacked and destroyed. Even in the worst of times, Frelimo seems to have remained committed to the logic and necessity of women's liberation.

Nonetheless, the acts of banditry, economic sabotage, and social destruction had a horrendous impact on Mozambique. These acts of violence and destruction diverted economic resources from development to security, impeded development work in industry, trade and agriculture, disrupted systematic planning and eventually bankrupted the country. "By 1983, Mozambique had no foreign exchange. It could not pay its foreign debts, and imports plummeted. There were shortages of fuel, consumer goods, and medicines; industrial production fell, largely due to shortages of imported raw materials."[107]

It was in this vulnerable position that Mozambique, under Frelimo, started talks with the IMF. All external donors insisted that the IMF had to be involved in Mozambique's economic reformulation, and that no aid would be forthcoming without a solid agreement with the IMF.

In its initial and subsequent analysis of Mozambique's economic problems, the IMF was certain that it had located the source. "The IMF could only see a crisis caused by state control of the economy, an explosive growth of the money supply, excessive management of foreign exchange, and too few exports. Its initial demands were sweeping: a virtual end to all controls and denationalization of virtually all economic and social sectors—health, education, property and industry."[108] By 1987, Mozambique had agreed to implement a Structural Adjustment Program "based on conditions imposed by the World Bank and the IMF."

After more than ten years of structural adjustment, Mozambique has recorded no substantial growth or development, nor has there been the creation of wealth and sustainable development promised by the World Bank and the IMF. It would appear that the policies implemented by the World Bank and the IMF have led to what Hanlon calls "the recolonization of Mozambique." Specifically in economic matters, "Portuguese, South African and British companies are taking over farms, factories, shops and tourist facilities that their compatriots abandoned in panic 20 years ago, just after independence. In the north there is a return to colonial style cotton concessions, where peasants are obliged to sell their cotton to a monopoly buyer and purchase their basic needs from the company store."[109] The net result of these policies has been an increase in poverty and suffering on a scale not seen since the colonial period.

Structural Adjustment Programs have affected women severely. "They somehow have to find extra income," and so some turn to trade or even prostitution. It should also be noted that the net aim of the IMF programs is not to develop Mozambique. The IMF and the World Bank have been clear on one point: their aid is not aimed at the rebuilding of Mozambique. This aid is not to be used to help Frelimo rekindle "the alternative civilization" through its social programs and economic policies. Indeed, "the IMF says that much post-war reconstruction is inflationary, and insists that inflation must be curbed first.... Programmes to

reopen roads, shops, schools and health posts are delayed and postponed."[110]

Peace, and with it the World Bank and IMF's programs, have not brought prosperity or even a hope of prosperity to Mozambique. In spite of being exemplary in its implementation of these programs, Mozambique continues to be gripped with poverty. And yet the IMF makes more demands "to tighten the belt." From about 1990, "the IMF has been squeezing the Mozambican economy, to no avail; inflation stubbornly remains over 40%. So each year the IMF argues that the economy has not been squeezed hard enough . . . and therefore the ratchet must be turned again. So each year they look for more things to control; each year the targets become more complex. For example, there is now pressure to increase taxation so that people have less money to spend."[111]

The imposition of the World Bank and the IMF solutions on to Mozambique has drastically compromised its sovereignty and opened its doors to economic and social policies that seriously threaten to erode "all the gains of the revolution." The impact of this eventuality has alarmed not only loyal followers of Frelimo but also those who feel that the country may be undergoing irreparable damage. In an extraordinary statement in 1995, *Nova Vida*, the Catholic Church magazine in Mozambique, condemned the policies of the World Bank and the IMF. The magazine stated that the aim of these policies was "to integrate Africa into a system of economic neo-colonialism which takes no account of people. What counts is the free market; its god is money."[112]

The inspiration to guide the rebuilding of Mozambique and safeguard "the gains of the revolution," has to be found in past victories, purpose, and triumphs. These victories and achievements "were remarkable in the way the whole society was drawn into reconstruction and development"; a feature that is conspicuously absent in the current policies of the World Bank and the IMF. The future of this revolution, and indeed of the position of women in Mozambique, "depends on how deep" past victories and triumphs "took root in the minds of people," and for "how

long the memory of those days will survive as a consciousness of what is possible."[113]

ANGOLA

Angola, under the MPLA, achieved its independence on 11 November 1975. Unlike the other former Portuguese colonies, fighting had not stopped at the time of independence. Angola won its freedom in war circumstances. Although the FNLA and UNITA and the MPLA had together signed the Alvor Accord in January 1975, pledging themselves to a joint coalition government, it was clear by the middle of 1975 that this agreement had largely broken down. The possibility of the MPLA assuming power in Luanda and ruling Angola greatly alarmed South Africa, the United States (and its Western allies), and the neighboring conservative governments, specifically Zaire, under Mobutu. What was it about the MPLA that caused so much fear?

The MPLA under Agostino Neto pledged to build a nonracial society. This was particularly important in a country like Angola, which had endured centuries of racism and racial prejudice, but was still multiracial. The MPLA realized that "too many Mesticos [mixed race] had been linked to the system in privileged positions, too many whites—the overwhelming majority of the 350,000 white settlers—had behaved immorally towards their black workers."[114] Nonetheless, the MPLA argued that it was vital to delink exploitation and race. "The exploitation Angolans had suffered was linked not to the white race but to the political regime." As for the Mesticos, it was vital to remember that they were not automatically exploiters; "some had joined the guerillas and been ready to sacrifice their lives for their people." As a result, "Black as well as white exploiters must be fought."[115] This message was a forthright denunciation of those accusations leveled against the MPLA that it was dominated (in its leadership) by former exploiters and oppressors and that it was hence not a true champion of African freedom. The MPLA was consistent in its aim "to forge national unity and to oppose all mani-

festations of tribalism, regionalism, and racism." This was clearly not true with the other parties.

Both the FNLA and UNITA were regionally based parties that appealed to specific ethnic nationalism. The FNLA, under Holden Roberto, appealed to the Kikongo people; while UNITA, under Jonas Savimbi, appealed to the Ovimbundu people. Beyond matters of ethnic nationalism, there were critical issues with regard to the economy, foreign relations, and social programs. The MPLA had from the outset pledged to build a socialist society. In its foreign relations, it would opt for non-alignment while supporting the liberation of South Africa and Namibia. This progressive and pan-African stand would be maintained in its solidarity with all liberation movements in the world "fighting against exploitation and imperialism." With regard to the national economy, the MPLA "had plans for the nationalization of vital industries, state control of foreign trade and greater control over foreign companies operating in Angola."[116] The FNLA and UNITA, on the other hand, were determined supporters of the capitalist solution. Their leaders would permit the local penetration of the economy by the multinational corporations while individually benefitting from this arrangement. There was, hence, a vision of specific ethnic domination in politics and economics supported by the United States (and its allies). In the case of UNITA, there was an added duty of supporting South Africa and its apartheid policies. Perhaps more than any other point, it is these differences on the economic future of the country and the role that it would play in the liberation of Southern Africa that made the MPLA-led Angola, a particularly hated enemy of the United States and South Africa.

The United States had a long-standing relationship with Holden Roberto, leader of the FNLA. Recruited and paid by the CIA to deny the MPLA becoming a dominant force in Angola, he had also cooperated closely with Mobutu of Zaire, his very close personal friend. This dual relationship facilitated the CIA's entry into Angolan postcolonial politics.[117] In October 1975,

Roberto's FNLA forces, together with Mobutu's army, invaded Angola to oust the MPLA from Luanda. In the south, UNITA forces, together with South African troops, invaded the country also with the purpose of ousting the MPLA from Luanda and assuming power. Both of these invasions were sanctioned and supported by the CIA.

It was in response "to this combined threat that led MPLA to call for large scale assistance from Cuba."[118] The entry of Cuban troops and Soviet arms into the Angolan conflict can be traced "to this combined threat." The MPLA, supported by Cuba and armed by the Soviet Union, was able to defeat the FNLA and Zaire troops. It also defeated South African troops and pushed them to the very south of the country. It was a triumph that the MPLA would not enjoy for any extended period. The FNLA, defeated and demoralized, essentially disintegrated. "Holden Roberto lived on in exile in Zaire and then France." His former soldiers, however, were eagerly recruited by South Africa as the nucleus of "a special unit, the 32 Battalion." This unit, mercenary in orientation, "was subsequently used both in northern Namibia and in Southern Angola."[119] UNITA forces under Savimbi "fled to the bush" after the defeat. They were, however, to regroup and under aggressive patronage cause the most extensive obstacle (and damage) to the reconstruction of Angola.

On assuming power in 1975, the MPLA faced not only security issues but also economic and social problems inherited from the colonial administration. What was the state of affairs in Angola in 1975? There was an almost complete breakdown of the economy. Years of wars of liberation and then the civil wars had caused enormous damage to the infrastructure. "The destruction of bridges, roads and transport vehicles" greatly affected the transport within the country. As a result, "many areas were cut off" not only "from food and other essential supplies" but also from markets.[120] These problems were further aggravated by the massive departure of the Portuguese settlers and professionals. Under colonial rule they had dominated the distribution and

wholesale system and also the retail stores. Their departure essentially "wrecked the distribution system."

The departing Portuguese adopted a "scorched earth" policy by destroying as much of the infrastructure as they could and also by "taking with them whatever plant they could." And so, "a soft drinks plant found its way to Brazil; two-thirds of the nation's trucks had gone; tractors were found in ditches, their engines wrecked and vital parts missing; the Luanda public water and electricity plans had been smuggled to Lisbon and teachers even went off with the school records."[121]

It is against this background, insecure and almost desperate, that the MPLA assumed power in Angola. It "had lost large numbers of leading cadres" through the wars of liberation, then through the civil war and other forms of violent clashes perpetrated by the FNLA and UNITA. But it had also endured internal splits and squabbles right up to 1975. "This meant that the MPLA had to take up the reins of government and the task of restructuring the economy and building an independent nation when its own party and organization was depleted, short of experienced cadres and barely recovered from the effects of factional conflict."[122] How did the new government deal with the "woman question?"

Most of the initiatives of the MPLA government toward the emancipation of women were undertaken by the OMA. From its formation in 1962, the OMA had always viewed its activities as complementary to the objectives of the MPLA. Although concerned with the position and role of women in Angola, the OMA had never looked at its aims as being in opposition to those of the MPLA. It remained one of the mass organizations with specific objectives affiliated with the MPLA. It had always refrained from framing its aims in strict gender terms; its definition of the struggle at hand avoided looking at men as the enemy.

In 1975, the OMA joined the MPLA in its fight to safeguard Angola's independence under sustained external attack. To this end, it sent delegates to eleven "West European countries, to tell

the world about the racist invasion" of Angola and also to explain the goal Angolans had set for themselves. This goal was the "building of scientific socialism" and also the "wish to establish relations with all countries in the world on the basis of respect for the universally recognized principles of peaceful coexistence between peoples, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-interference in internal affairs and mutual advantage."[123]

The linkage, indeed the close affiliation between the OMA and the MPLA, has been criticized by several Western academic analysts who have argued that the OMA's integrity was compromised, and that its focus was shifted away from critical gender problems because of male domination of the discourse. In her study of the position of women in the Angolan society, Catherine V. Scott is very critical of the OMA's theoretical and ideological analysis of the problems of gender in Angola. She charges the OMA of having applied, "in a mechanical way," Engel's and Lenin's theses on the oppression and liberation of women. These theses, which she finds inadequate and wanting, led the OMA to neglect "any analysis of the possible persistence of patriarchal attitudes in post-revolutionary societies."[124] More specifically, Scott argues that the OMA avoided a micro analysis of male oppression of women. This is located in the household. Instead, "the site of oppression" was shifted "from the household to colonial public policies and the impersonal forces of capitalism, both of which are alone responsible for leaving women powerless victims."[125] Are these and similar criticisms justified?

In Angola in 1975 and beyond, the most critical question and objective remained to be the expulsion of external aggression and the protection of the citizens from this brutality and massive destruction of the country's industrial and agricultural infrastructure. It is a struggle that called for massive mobilization. Women and men were expected and, indeed, did participate in this war effort. Much of the government's attention and efforts were of necessity "diverted from the task of transforming society into the fight against UNITA and South Africa and into the struggle to

rehabilitate the economy."[126] Without peace and security, there would be no independent Angola. Without independence and security there would be no social transformation. The emancipation of women, fervently endorsed and embraced by the MPLA, had to be tackled within the context of war, external aggression, an almost collapsed economy, and a desperate lack of amenities. "The specific aspects of the position of women," President Jose Eduardo dos Santos stated, "should not make us lose sight of the overall nature of the country's problems, on the solution of which, in the last analysis, the emancipation of women depends. Unless we solve the main problems we now face, already defined by the Party as the imperialist war of aggression and the economic and financial crisis, we will not be able to find adequate solutions to women's problems."[127]

The OMA was keenly aware of the oppression and exploitation of women within households. "Men in our country," it concluded, "behave like chiefs, with absolute and unlimited powers. These macho feelings are passed on from father to son through the power of example."[128] Further, the OMA was aware that it is the women "under sub-human conditions who produce most of the food" consumed in the country. With regard to housework, the OMA recognized the "double shift" endured by women. The division of labor within the household penalized and oppressed the woman. "When she arrives home, a woman nearly always starts a new work shift." The solution offered by the OMA is close to Lenin's prescription. "The complete and true emancipation of women will necessarily involve the abolition of individual domestic slavery and the establishment of a wider collective economy."[129]

On the question of traditional cultures and women, both the OMA and the MPLA quickly realized that no definitive change could result from "issuing a decree" banning them. The OMA favored monogamy, which it believed in a Socialist society promoted "a healthy and happy marriage based on love and mutual respect." It, therefore, attached great importance to legal equality and "equality of rights for men and women under the family law."

This equality would, "among other things ... guarantee a woman's free and full consent to marriage, combating polygamy, ensuring equal rights as regards the education of children, and recognizing the equality of children born in and out of wedlock, especially in respect of descent, inheritance...."[130] Nonetheless, the OMA's definition of emancipation continued to embrace the legal, political, economic, and social aspects of a woman's life. In what programs was the OMA involved in Angola after 1975?

By 1983, the OMA had 1,014,988 members. These were in "18 provinces, in 163 municipalities and 386 communes and organized in 5,595 neighbourhoods and village branches."[131] Through these branches and members, the OMA engaged in "propaganda work," publicizing its work and "heightening the consciousness of Angolan women." Utilizing activists and cadres trained locally and abroad, the OMA explained "to the population, and especially to women, the main guidelines of the Party and objectives of OMA." These activists were also used to collect information with regard to the problems facing the people. This information was then passed "on to leading bodies."[132] The OMA and its activists acted as both propounders of the party objectives and also the conveyors of information that the party would otherwise not have as it struggled to restructure the postcolonial society.

A lot of emphasis was placed on education. Throughout its existence, the OMA placed a very high premium on education. "Without education and vocational and technical training, there could be no emancipation or liberation of women."[133] Why? Illiteracy was identified as an enemy of liberation. Literacy would free the mind "from obscurantism" and enable women to be active and equal participants in production. In this way, women could participate in their own liberation. "Not to see the question in these terms is to make the constitutional equality of the sexes a dead letter and, what is more dangerous, to take the paternalistic attitude of imposing something without being in a position to assume responsibility for it, like involving women in production without paying attention to their degree of academic and

professional knowledge...."[134] The OMA participated extensively in the literacy campaign, especially in the rural areas where the bulk of Angolans resided. Huambo Vocational Training Center was established. This center taught women more than reading and writing. It also covered "agriculture, health and hygiene and political education" on top of teaching the Portuguese language. Women trained at this center returned to their villages and were, in turn, expected to train others.

Women were also repeatedly engaged in what was termed "socially useful work." The OMA took part in "campaigns such as the cleaning and embellishment of towns and villages" and also in coffee harvests. The organization also participated extensively in vaccination campaigns; resettlement of refugees returning home, and also the "care of widows and orphans"; the victims of external aggression.

The MPLA government also undertook several policy initiatives that reinforced and expanded the activities of the OMA. In health, "The new 1975 Constitution established health care as a right for everyone." If implemented, this would greatly improve the health of women and children. The government was nonetheless faced with a shortage of funds and doctors. The government appealed to Cuba for help. As a result, Cuba supplied "the bulk of hospital doctors and technicians until enough Angolans had been trained."[135] By 1977, most of the provincial hospitals were functioning "staffed by Cubans" with help from East Germany, Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria "and Holland Medical Committee." The establishment of a National Health Service in 1975 enabled children, women, and men to have access to some medical care including vaccinations. Even in war conditions, this was a marked improvement over the colonial medical system for Africans. The government nationalized the education system in 1975. It allowed church schools "to continue in operation provided they charged no fee and taught the national curriculum."[136] Eventually, Angolans staffed all primary education schools while still receiving aid in secondary education from Cuba and Portugal.

On marriage, the government, like the OMA, avoided direct legal assault against bride price or even polygamy. President dos Santos stated that his government was against "all practices and customs which in any way prevent women from asserting themselves." He felt, however, that these customs could not be eradicated through immediate legal censure. "Only the general process of evolution and the development of individual consciousness, through literacy, longer schooling and new social conditions," the president said, "will eventually eliminate traditions which are not in keeping with scientific concepts of the development of the world and society."[137] Although the government endorsed contraception, its effectiveness was limited because of the lack of a coordinated national family planning service, opposition from some men who felt "that their virility is at stake," and the lack of supplies of contraceptives in the rural areas. As a result, "most women employ their own methods" and are uncomfortable talking about these publicly.[138] Divorce is now legal, although it clearly has affected "only a minority of Angolans."

Sex discrimination in employment was abolished by "the Party and government" in three critical areas; "training schemes, work and pay packets." The principle of equal pay for equal work is now "accepted without question and in most factories men and women do the same kinds of work."[139] In some respects, this has been easy to monitor since the "State is the country's largest employer." These employment initiatives have given women opportunities for self-advancement that were clearly not there during colonial rule. Women are now represented in almost every job category. Most of them are mothers. As a result, the "OMA has concentrated much of its pressure group work on improving working women's lives: creches, improved maternity benefits (including a three month rest and the employer obliged to keep her job open)."[140]

The emancipation of women in Angola was seen both by the MPLA and the OMA as a long process. Overcoming colonial legacies and parts of traditional cultures not receptive to gender

equality required structural changes, economic development, and political education. Legal equality alone would not guarantee liberation. "The principle of equality for men and women in society," the OMA stated, "is not sufficient to ensure that women are in fact an active element in their country's development or that they participate equally in decision making."[141] In the OMA's view, this equality will be the result of "profound changes in social, economic, and political structures" that will lead to an end to all forms of sex discrimination. Armed with legal equality, the OMA envisaged a future of gender equality that would allow all women to decide freely "on their political participation, marriage or divorce, and the number of children they wish to have."[142]

All efforts toward social transformation and the creation of the new social, political, and economic structures were profoundly affected by the extensive external aggression against Angola since achieving its independence. After 1976, this aggression was largely by South Africa, the United States (and its allies) in support of UNITA led by Savimbi.

Jonas Savimbi had a long history of cooperating with enemies of Angola's freedom. During the late colonial period, when liberation wars had been launched, Savimbi entered into a secret pact with the Portuguese armed forces in Angola. The essence of this pact was to formalize a military strategy by which Savimbi's UNITA and the Portuguese army would jointly fight against the MPLA.[143]

After independence, he quickly acquired new sponsors and patrons: South Africa and the United States. After UNITA and South African forces had been driven back from Luanda by the MPLA in 1976, the South African army undertook to train, equip and fund UNITA. Jonas Savimbi portrayed himself as a true Angolan patriot, fighting to rid the country of Cuban and Soviet domination. He cast himself as a defender of Angola's freedom and as an anti-Communist crusader. The United States, eager to "win one over communism," especially after Vietnam, embraced Savimbi and his ideological pretensions. This was specifically true

after Reagan became the president of the United States and proceeded to embrace an amalgam of "freedom fighters" in the third world as effective tools to stop "Soviet expansionism." Savimbi had access to Reagan and George Bush, whose administrations supported him with money and weapons (including stinger missiles).[144] Right-wing conservative pressure groups in the United States embraced Savimbi and carefully cultivated his image as a "freedom fighter." Both the right wing and "mainstream" publications eventually came to look at Angola's plight in a strict "cold war context." This media coverage,[145] together with official government support, reinforced South Africa's military support for UNITA. The result was a devastating campaign of terror against Angola. What exactly did this external aggression do in Angola?

UNITA collaborated militarily with the South African army in its operations. It destroyed health centers, food processing plants, agricultural units, transport infrastructures, schools, and bridges. The aim was to terrorize the population and drive them away from the areas under the MPLA control. For South Africa, the aims were simple. It wanted the Marxist government in Luanda to fall, and then South Africa would install UNITA into power. UNITA would not allow the ANC nor SWAPO to operate from Luanda nor support their struggle against South Africa. But also the destruction of Angola would "prove that Marxism does not work."

In 1981, "South Africa launched Operation Protea, a conventional invasion of Cunene Province with over 10,000 troops"; it occupied "much of Cunene Province, including the provincial capital, Ngiva."[146] This, and other invasions, installed UNITA in "Cunene, and Cuando Cubango Provinces." An instant capital city at Jamba was erected for Savimbi. And from here several Western journalists filed flattering reports about him, relying almost exclusively "upon information supplied by UNITA spokesmen."[147] Beyond this area of control, UNITA employed tactics of terror to make the country ungovernable. One of its most effective weapons in this endeavor were land mines.

Land mines were extensively used by UNITA and the South African army. Government troops also used land mines. However, it is clear that "the majority of the mines are attributed to UNITA."[148] Some of the mines used included the M16 A1 and M16 A2 "bounding anti-personnel mine[s]." This land mine "explodes at waist or chest height and rips apart the torso of anyone within one hundred feet."[149] There was also the PMN blast antipersonnel mine. Manufactured in the Soviet Union, this huge mine also caused numerous casualties.

UNITA laid its land mines randomly and no reliable record exists of their locations. UNITA laid its land mines on "roads, paths, bridges" and in agricultural fields. This led to general terror. "... fear of land mines has led to wholesale desertion of villages."[150] How has Angola been affected by land mines?

Angola's countryside is still a dangerous place. Land mines have killed and maimed thousands of Angolans. "Angola has one of the highest rates of land mine injuries per capita in the world."[151] It has a disproportionate number of amputees whose care is expensive. Although most of the victims have been soldiers, civilians—both male and female—have also been affected. Women have suffered extensively from land mines. "There is evidence to suggest that more women die from land mine injuries than men."[152]

On a personal level, women amputees have found it difficult to attract mates and husbands; those already married have sometimes been abandoned by their husbands.[153] Many amputees have very limited prospects for productive lives in the future. Living in a poor country at war, many amputees face a grim future. "The majority who come from farming backgrounds are likely to remain a burden on their families for the foreseeable future. Many have been reduced to begging; amputee beggars are a common sight in Angolan towns."[154]

This war of aggression against Angola drastically affected the agricultural sector. UNITA's generalized reign of terror in the countryside led a large proportion of people to "fear that fight-

ing could come to their locality at any time." Fear of land mines, especially in agricultural fields, affected food production and trade in food stuffs. Besides, there was the UNITA practice of burning down villages and then "stealing cattle and plough oxen," both having a direct impact on food production. Many families went into hiding for fear of being abducted by UNITA "to serve in its armed forces or to be auxiliaries." These disruptions to food production led to famine and the need for food relief aid.[155] War drove hundreds of thousands of Angolans to the urban areas for food and security. "The urban population grew from 18% of the total in 1975 to 31% in 1986. By 1990, over half of Angola's population was estimated to be living in urban areas."[156] This had tremendous implications on the country's economic prospects, especially under war circumstances. Food imports to feed the urban residents dominated the economy. Most of the funds that financed these food imports were derived from oil exports.

The MPLA's and the OMA's pursuit of gender equality and the emancipation of women was a crucial part of the new country's drive to create "an alternative civilization." This "alternative civilization," had clearly not been realized by 1991, when the MPLA and UNITA signed a peace treaty in Lisbon on 31 May.[157] This lack of success has to be attributed to the "policy of destabilization pursued" by South Africa and the United States and the resultant widespread devastation of the country's infrastructure. The lack of security, then the killings, and the spread of general terror greatly reduced the MPLA's ability to implement its socialist policies. The need for security inhibited open discussions about ideology and its implementation and also delayed the growth of a new revolutionary culture throughout the country. It is this new revolutionary culture, affirming equality, that the OMA saw as a crucial variable in the emancipation of women. "The most difficult thing in the new society," the OMA stated, "is the fact that everything depends on people's consciousness. The aim is to create the new man and woman. Everything is therefore seen in terms of educating people."[158]

CHAPTER 3

ZIMBABWE AND SOUTH AFRICA

ZIMBABWE

The ascension to power in Zimbabwe by ZANU (PF) under the leadership of Robert Mugabe in 1980 was the result of several critical factors. ZANLA guerillas had clearly scored significant victories and made a large portion of the countryside "ungovernable." But these guerillas, determined, enthusiastic, and focused, had not been able to crash Ian Smith's colonial forces (and his mercenaries). This reality, together with the active intervention of "Frontline States," the Commonwealth, Britain, the USA, and even South Africa, led to the Lancaster House Conference in London in 1979. Britain had agreed to reassert its nominal colonial authority and preside over a constitutional conference to determine the future of Zimbabwe. The result was the "Lancaster House Compromise," a development that continues to determine the pace and direction of change in Zimbabwe. The "compromise" allowed for majority rule that would be determined through a general election. The Constitution agreed upon, however, erected insurmountable barriers to any meaningful transformation of Zimbabwe. Property rights were to be respected and protected, and for ten years whites in Zimbabwe would have their own representation in Parliament. While the "compromise" protected whites and their privileges, it presented ZANU with a potentially explosive political problem.

Throughout the 1970s, ZANU and its military wing, ZANLA, had espoused a socialist agenda for Zimbabwe. Because of this position Mugabe's ascension to power was greeted with horror among whites in Zimbabwe, South Africa, and also by the

governments of Britain and the USA. He was portrayed as an avid Marxist intent of "nationalising Western values." ZANU, in its election campaign, had promised fundamental changes in the new society. It reminded the peasants of its role in forcing the whites "under criminal Smith" to compromise. This revolutionary record together with promises of a just, nonracist, nonexploitative society, gave Mugabe and ZANU the electoral victory. At this stage, it should be recalled, there had not been an expansive discussion of the compromise and especially its implications to the future of Zimbabwe. For many, the compromise was seen as a temporary "tactical manoeuvre" that would not necessarily deter Mugabe from embracing radical policies as he had repeatedly stated he would during the liberation struggle.

In 1980, Mugabe inherited a racist, exploitative society. Since the days of Cecil Rhodes' BSA Company, white settlers had erected "a leisure, pleasure seeking society ... with a life style which even whites on the top rung of the social ladder could not have found anywhere else.... Whites delighted in their environment, servants and wealth,"[1] and a self-serving belief that in some sense they were carrying on "the white man's burden." Unlike Mozambique or Angola, where there was a mass exodus of whites, in Zimbabwe no such exodus occurred. Most whites, assured of their welfare "and standard of living" through constitutional guarantees, stayed. There was also the realization that Britain and the USA would deter Mugabe's government from disturbing the welfare and privileges of these whites who had, after all, agreed to live under an African-led government.

There had not been massive destruction of the infrastructure, which many whites and even Mugabe believed was "better than that which other African countries have inherited." This factor, the new government believed, would make it easier to transform the inherited economy.[2] Zimbabwe also faced no serious shortage of manpower to fill posts in the civil service. "Blacks entered the service at the top, as pressure to Africanize the public service was great. There were suitable candidates: lower grade civil ser-

vants who could be upgraded, as well as younger people who had studied abroad or at home."[3]

Mugabe also retained many senior white civil servants. Both of these groups presented clear problems for ZANU. Many of the career African civil servants that were now assuming senior positions were inherited from the colonial service. The young Africans trained at home or abroad had not necessarily been active supporters of the liberation struggle. Many had maintained nominal contact with the liberation movements without actively participating in the revolution. They now dusted off their party cards and stood at the front of the que, eager to assume responsibility. It was not correct to assume that these people would immediately "know" and identify with the meaning of the revolution and the expectations that it had aroused. One of these expectations was the emancipation of African women and their incorporation in the new society on the basis of equality.

The new ZANU government signaled its general intent to treat the "woman question" seriously by creating the Ministry of Community Development and Women's Affairs in 1981. Its minister was a woman; a former key guerilla leader, Mrs. Teurai Ropa Nhongo. Although she did not have advanced formal education, her appointment to the Cabinet at a very young age gave the impression that Mugabe's government was acknowledging the valiant role played by women in the liberation struggle. Mrs. Nhongo became a strong advocate of gender equality while working in a ministry generally regarded as "light weight." The ministry was "grossly underfunded. In 1983, it received just over 1 per cent of the national budget, and many of its programs—such as expanding child care service to women in urban areas—could only be funded through foreign aid."[4]

Besides creating a ministry in charge of women's affairs, the new government moved quickly to change some aspects of the Constitution that were glaringly discriminatory toward African women. During colonial rule, "all African women, married or unmarried, were perpetual minors, always under the guardian-

ship of their fathers, their husbands, or some male relative."[5] It would have been morally and politically impossible to uphold this position in the postcolonial era. The contributions of African women to the revolution, so fresh and numerous, and ZANU's own commitment to some form of women's emancipation, compelled action. This came on 10 December 1982. The Parliament passed the Legal Age Majority Act, which "conferred full legal capacity on all Zimbabweans above the age of 18. Consequently, all women who attain the age of 18 years or are lawfully married, whichever is the sooner, enjoy full legal capacity."[6] What are the basic provisions of this statute?

As a result of the Legal Age Majority Act (LAMA), "women have full capacity and can enter into any contract, including a marriage contract without assistance. They have full proprietary capacity to acquire, own and dispose of any proprietary interest, movable or immovable. They enjoy full *locus standi in judicio* and can thus sue or be sued, and enforce or defend their legal rights without assistance."[7] This legal statute has had a tremendous impact on social relations. In marriage, it is now legal for girls sixteen years of age and boys eighteen years of age to enter into a monogamous marriage without parental or guardian consent. Under customary law, however, no minimum age for marriage is explicitly stated, and as a result, "a girl above the age of 12 can, with the consent of her guardian, contract a customary law marriage."[8]

The payment of lobola, an integral part of traditional marriages, has now been made optional as a consequence of the provisions of LAMA. But lobola has not been abolished. Rather, "Parties are free to enter into any lobola arrangements they may wish to, although such arrangements would have no bearing on the legal validity of the marriage."[9] Many men, and even women, still allow lobola to be paid arguing that it is an integral part of the traditional culture. In a lively debate published in Zimbabwe's women's magazine, *Speak Out*, Willie Musarurwa argued: "Lobola means that a man loves his wife. If he does not pay, it does not dignify his love ... lobola gives a woman security because

if the husband abuses her, we, her family can intervene." In the same magazine, Zine Chitepo strongly advanced the view that, in fact, lobola is "institutionalized oppression of women. Lobola is the root of problems between couples. After paying lobola, a man feels he has power over his wife, and he can abuse her." Chitepo also felt that lobola did not give a woman dignity. "If one's dignity is based on how much money was paid for you, is that dignity? Respect must come naturally, not based on how much money changed hands."[10]

In traditional Shona culture, lobola or *roora* not only legitimized the marriage, but also "gave the husband legal custody of the children resulting from the union."[11] Partly basing themselves on the provisions of LAMA, "The post-independence courts have taken the approach that" payment of lobola in itself alone "is irrelevant to the enquiry of where the best interests of the children lie."[12] Mothers can, therefore, "become sole custodians of children upon divorce."

The implication of divorce on the welfare of women has also received legal attention. The two provisions under which divorce can be granted in Zimbabwe today are: "the irretrievable breakdown of marriage, and mental illness or continuous unconsciousness." The material welfare of a spouse upon divorce can be linked to the nature and type of marriage contracted. In Zimbabwe, "there are two types of marriages that can be contracted ... a customary law potentially polygamous marriage under the African Marriages Act, Chapter 238 and a general law monogamous marriage under the Marriage Act, Chapter 37."[13] For Africans, their property rights are governed by customary law in spite of the law under which their marriage was contracted. "Under customary law all the property acquired by the spouses, except property falling within the categories of *movoko* property and *mombe yeumai/inkomo yohlanga* property, belongs to the husband, who is entitled to retain all of it at the dissolution of marriage."[14] This provision dealt untold hardships to women who were left without property or any means of liveli-

hood at the dissolution of the marriage. It was partly in response to this injustice that Parliament passed the Matrimonial Causes Act, Section 7 of 1985. This law "empowers the court to make an equitable reallocation of the property of the spouses at divorce, having regard to various factors, which include the direct and indirect contributions of the spouses to the marriage, the age of the spouses and their needs, incomes and obligations."[15] Section 33 of the Matrimonial Causes Act also enables former spouses (mostly wives) to sue for support. "This means that any spouse or ex-spouse who can prove the need can obtain an order of maintenance in his or her favour either at the time of divorce or at any time thereafter."[16]

With regard to working women (especially in the urban areas) some of their problems were addressed through the Labour Relations Act of 1985. This law, which "set out the lowest conditions under which female employees may work," also abolished "discrimination in employment on the basis of sex." It is, however, in the area of maternity leave (and unpaid leave) that this law had the most impact. Women employees are now entitled to ninety days of partially paid maternity leave. This could be extended if the "birth of the child" produced complications. On partial payment, it is stipulated that "if an employee agrees to forfeit all other leave days she may have accumulated over the previous six months then she is entitled to 75% of her normal pay, but if she refuses or does not have any leave days to forfeit then she is entitled to only 60% of her normal pay."[17] Female employees still breast feeding are entitled to either one hour or two half-hour periods to go and breast feed provided this is not so disruptive "to normal production at her job."

In spite of these laws and legal provisions, women of Zimbabwe still face enormous legal and political hurdles in their quest for gender equality. In this regard, it is worthwhile to remember that "The Zimbabwean Constitution (SI 1600 of 1979) does not forbid discrimination on grounds of sex and thereby permits gender-related discrimination." In the absence of direct and

specific "blanket abolition of sexual discrimination, the eradication of discrimination depends on piece-meal legislation."[18] This alone, however, has failed to "completely bridge the gap left by the Constitution." There are also still areas where women face direct and immediate legal discrimination; citizenship, for example. "A married woman who is a citizen of Zimbabwe does not have the right to pass her citizenship to her husband or to her children." Nonetheless, "Under section 7(2) of the Citizenship of Zimbabwe Act (no. 23 of 1984), a woman who marries a Zimbabwean citizen has the right to be registered as a citizen of Zimbabwe."[19] It is, hence, very clear that men are favored in this legislation. This also affects the citizenship of legitimate and illegitimate children. "The citizenship of a legitimate child depends upon the citizenship of its father; the mother passes her citizenship to her child only if the child is illegitimate."[20]

These piece-meal legislations point out the problems that still confront Zimbabwe's "unfinished revolution." It is critical to recall that ZANU did not overthrow the settler regime. The independence attained in April 1980 was the result of a negotiated settlement. ZANU, which had by the 1970s acquired revolutionary and socialist theory, had not by 1980 resolved the contradictory ideological strands within it. "Like the ANC of South Africa, the Zimbabwean liberation movements accommodated all tendencies ranging from nationalism to socialism."[21] Rudo Gaidzanwa has argued that the "dominant tendencies" in these movements, were "the radical nationalist ones." These ideological tensions and strands found observable expressions in the post-1980 era.

Robert Mugabe, while repeatedly asserting that ZANU was intent on building socialism in Zimbabwe, proceeded very cautiously in tackling the key social and economic problems inherited from colonialism. His administration left the state apparatus and "the basic economic structure virtually intact." This cautiousness was attributed to two interlocking factors. On one hand, Mugabe's government argued repeatedly that its "hands were

tied" by the provisions of the Lancaster House Constitution. On the other hand, Mugabe feared "destroying what was a highly diversified economy and the acceptance that this was capitalist and white dominated."[22] The new government demonstrated again and again its adherence to the spirit of Lancaster House and proceeded to adopt policies aimed at reassuring the white settlers that their property and general interests would be protected. "Such support and confidence among whites for Mugabe, of course, also had the effect of reassuring foreign firms that their investments and interests in Zimbabwe were safe.... Praise of this nature was crucial to the ZANU (PF) government which hoped to attract substantial foreign investment to promote capitalist development."[23] By the mid-1980s, any serious discussion about socialism had receded in the far background.

The government's economic strategy was partly formulated by Bernard Chidzero. He was a former high-ranking UNO official. His strategy shunned Marxist solutions while being principally concerned with accelerating growth. Economic growth would provide employment, facilitate resource allocation and equity in earnings, and also attract foreign investment. Taxation, levied by the state from local and foreign investment would be used to fund the government's social programs; especially in education and health. "Government perceived that economic growth could be achieved by acceptance of existing structures."[24] These economic structures, formulated under racist colonial rule, had left Zimbabwe by 1980 "with one of the largest income disparities in the world ... thanks to the racially based salary structures."[25] This acceptance reinforced "discriminating structures" and, as Ruth Weiss states, "helped to create stepping stones for new black elite." Who are they?

The new black elite are composed of the political rulers, the senior civil servants, the commercial and trading elite, the few African commercial farmers, and the professional class. Independence reinforced the social class stratification of the society. There was a rush to inherit and assume the lifestyle of former colonial

masters. Making money and "moving on" became a critical objective of the black elite. "Rewards for lost years were demanded and often received—though mainly for those at the top, the leading politicians and the educated."[26] They inevitably engaged in conspicuous consumption and sought to distance themselves from those aspects of African culture deemed inconvenient to the new lifestyle and its values. The objective of this elite was to attain entry into the former colonial social and economic system. If they railed against racism, it was to open doors previously closed to them. They did not see the need to restructure the system, let alone the need to reformulate it. It is, therefore, not surprising that by the late 1980s the black elite had started to question "the whole rhetoric of socialism and the social welfare programmes of the government which benefitted poor Zimbabweans and led to high individual income taxes for the bourgeoisie."[27]

In spite of the devotion of the black elite to the capitalist system and the appeasement of white settlers, there was no evidence that whites wanted to join the new society on the basis of equality and create a nonracist country. "The enormous inequality between blacks and whites continued, for there was no obvious way to bring about a significant improvement in income distribution."[28] Socially, the whites remained aloof. Now known as Rhodies, they avoided social interaction with Africans, including the black elite. "Rhodies who invite blacks into their homes are exceptions. They never visit blacks at home."[29] They complained about "falling standards," including the way Africans spoke English. By 1990, Zimbabwe was a society in which the economic interests of the black elite and whites merged, but which was still a segregated society. The black elite were still junior economic partners in the enterprise. "It has been estimated that about 10,000 white individuals or foreign controlled companies operated the levers of all sectors of the economy."[30] How did the lack of reformulation of the new society and its objectives of development affect the African woman?

Throughout the colonial period, African women (who mostly resided in the rural areas) comprised the largest portion of the illiterate population. "Families were reluctant to invest in a girl's education. First, her labour was required by her mother; secondly, one would marry into another family."[31] These attitudes, together with the burden of paying fees, drastically limited the availability of schooling to Africans in general and to African women more specifically. In the postindependence period, education became one of the major priorities of the new government. There was a significant increase in African student enrollment in schools from about 800,000 in 1979 to about 2.9 million in 1989. This increase in both the number of schools and pupils did not lead to an increase in the quality of education provided. By 1989, there was a marked difference in the quality of education available in rural and urban areas. Further, there was a significant rise of private schools catering to whites and the black elite. As a result, peasant women have not benefitted from the educational reforms like the urban middle class women. These middle class women (and their daughters and sons) have benefitted immensely from the new opportunities for employment and social advancement available in the postindependence era.

Perhaps no issue is as emotional and potentially explosive in Zimbabwe as land redistribution. The critical focus of the guerilla war in Zimbabwe was land; the need to acquire profitable, fertile land. The support given to the guerillas by both peasant women and men was to a large degree prompted by the promise that political independence would improve their economic situation through the acquisition of land. Mugabe's government repeatedly promised land to the peasants. What policies were pursued to implement these several promises?

The terms of the Lancaster House Compromise, forbade compulsory acquisition of land from white settlers. Instead, there was "the willing seller, willing buyer" policy. In policies quite similar to those pursued in Kenya, the government undertook to move "black families or co-operatives, in a carefully planned

way, onto land willingly sold by whites. Britain agreed to fund the operation, believing that an 'orderly and planned' programme would promote political stability."[32] Between 1980 and 1989 only "52,000 families, some 416,000 people were resettled" on land bought by the government. The most important resettlement scheme is what has come to be known as "Model A." In this type of scheme, "Land is distributed in 12-acre holdings for houses and gardens, based on a series of permits potentially retractable by the Government. Settlers should be aged 22-55, and married (or widowed) with dependents; they must live on the allocated land, and are not permitted to hold any formal sector employment."[33]

After the initial burst of resettlement on land purchased between 1981 and 1983, there was very limited progress on this issue. The government moved cautiously and proceeded to harass or evict those peasants who squatted on settler farms illegally. The acquired land was not necessarily fertile. Many peasant families found out that "the ex-commercial farms from which the villages are carved lacked amenities; the settlers may find themselves temporarily worse off than they were previously," with no or limited access "to markets, primary and secondary schools, clinics, clean water, and shops."[34] Besides, women did not own the land. Movement to these settlement schemes has not appreciably increased gender equality on the question of land ownership.

The government revived the land issue in 1990, and in 1991 "amended the constitution to allow for the compulsory acquisition of land, with little compensation, and limited rights of appeal to the courts.[35] Although the government did not proceed to implement this threat, there was a well orchestrated outcry from white farmers, the "judicial, financial and banking circles," together with the British government, and of course, the World Bank. In 1997, the land issue again resurfaced with Mugabe promising to "really seize land without compensation this time." As the *The New York Times* reported, Mugabe reasoned that such seizure was justified "since whites stole it on their arrival 107

years ago and still hold 70 per cent of the best land nearly two decades after white rule ended."[36]

The importance of the land question to the African women is further reinforced by the fact that the majority of the families still reside in overcrowded rural areas—areas in which they were pushed by white settlers. Although a few peasants have benefitted from access to markets (previously closed to Africans), the majority of them suffer from acute "land hunger." This has stagnated their social advancement and postponed any changes in gender relations. "By the 1990s, most peasants had not risen above subsistence level."[37] Yet even on this explosive question of land, the black elite seems to have found some accommodation with the white settlers. There has been a steady purchase of commercial farms by the black elite intent on becoming "gentleman farmers" and hence opposed to radical changes in the land tenure.

On the more personal yet public issue of family planning, the ZANU government has chosen a course of action that clearly contradicts its position during the whole period of nationalist agitation. Established in 1957, the Family Planning Programme for Africans was strongly opposed by African nationalists. The colonial government (and its affiliate agencies) sought to control African "massive unwanted and unnecessary fertility." African fertility led to a population explosion that could not be provided for. It produced, in the words of one white backbencher, "shiftless and the incompetent Africans."[38] The African nationalists protested vehemently against colonial policies of family planning which, to them, "was a dark colonialist conspiracy to control black fertility,"[39] while flooding "Zimbabwe with white immigrant trash from Europe." In the countryside, many peasants remained unconvinced that birth control was "the solution to their problems." By the 1970s, when the guerillas infiltrated the countryside from Mozambique, "they effectively put an end to this colonial Family Planning Programme."[40]

The new government, under Mugabe, proceeded to reverse itself on this critical issue. "The battle for political power, which

included the battle of the womb, having been won, the role of women in society had to be adjusted in accordance with changing priorities. The enemy was no longer colonialism and white supremacy, but underdevelopment and its attendant problems. To help fight this new war, women must be relieved of the 'drudge of constant pregnancy,' at one time hailed as a patriotic duty, and given an opportunity to 'play a meaningful role in society.'"[41] Family planning, population control, and economic development were now interlinked. By 1986, it became the official policy of the new government to complement the economic policy devised by Chidzero and "other pragmatists," who "exhibited a marked preference for models of economic development favoured by such institutions as USAID and the World Bank, models that emphasized the need for population control, especially in the 'third world'."[42]

By 1989 and beyond, Mugabe's government was hailed for its efforts in population control. Mugabe himself and the Family Planning Council would later receive international awards. The arguments used are hauntingly similar to those advanced in the 1950s and 1960s by the colonial government. It is unlikely, however, that population control in itself will make the peasants richer and women more economically productive, as defined by the state. Closely linked to this is the issue of abortion, which is still illegal, "except on medical grounds, and is still strongly disapproved by most people. Women who do have abortions are forced to the 'back streets' with their unhygienic conditions and dangerous consequences."[43]

The landmark legislation of LAMA and even the creation of a ministry for women's affairs have not drastically improved the welfare and prospects of the majority of the African women in Zimbabwe. The retention of colonial institutions and values worked to reinforce patriarchal authority and to legitimize gender oppression—all in the name of defending "traditional culture." No revolutionary culture was ever allowed to grow nor did the new state seek to create new institutions that stressed gender

equality and egalitarianism. There was a marked distinction between government policy—cautious and neocolonial—and the expectations aroused by revolutionary rhetoric and by initial flirtation with the socialist solution.

The Ministry of Women's Affairs failed to advance a consistent and laudable policy that accelerated women's emancipation. Instead, it became a "women's corner" that promoted isolated income generating enterprises funded largely by foreign donors. "Most of the lower-level staff are domestic science demonstrators trained under the old regime, whose experience in organizing women has mainly involved offering housekeeping, nutrition, and child care courses.... Many of the Ministry's field workers are somewhat patronizing toward the women with whom they work, seeing them as ignorant of the skills that could make them better homemakers."[44]

The Ministry of Women's Affairs failed to incorporate former women combatants and guerillas, as most of them lacked advanced formal education qualifications. As a result, their militancy and devotion to revolutionary change was not harnessed. Indeed many of these former women guerillas have faced serious obstacles in being reabsorbed into society. Their experience as guerillas has not been readily welcomed by a society that failed to embrace a revolutionary culture. Some parents have vetoed the idea of their sons marrying these former guerillas, who are seen as "wild and stubborn," largely due to their self-assertion.

In 1983, the Ministry of Women's Affairs failed to defend the African women against an official assault by the government. "The government authorised the arrest of women countrywide on the pretext that these women who were walking at night were prostitutes."[45] These arrests sparked off massive protests and demonstrations by women who held that the Constitution (and of course the LAMA statute) "gave them a right to move on their own with or without marriage certificates." Marriage certificates were demanded by the police, who believed that an unmarried woman walking alone at night was up to mischief—most

probably prostitution. It has been argued that the order for this roundup and harassment of women represented a reassertion of male authority after the fluid period of revolutionary struggle. The order, however, further demonstrates a deliberate effort by the government to define acceptable areas of women's emancipation. The definition is narrow. It reaffirms the position of women as mothers, dependents, and workers. They are excluded from challenging the national authorities on matters of national economic and social policy.

By the late 1990s, it is fair to state, the success of African women in Zimbabwe in social, economic, and political advancement failed to meet the level of expectations aroused by the revolutionary struggle. This, in part, resulted from the fact that "the structures which favour men against women, and the old against the young, remain largely in place."[46] Yet there remains the stated commitment by ZANU and Mugabe to facilitate women's emancipation. This has led to the pursuit of contradictory policies by the government on the "woman question." As for women, those "in high government positions seem willing now to accept incremental gains," while the poor majority "now refuse to accept a completely passive role."[47] This has led to bitterness. The bitterness is particularly evident among the peasant women who carried, either directly or indirectly, the major burden of the liberation war. These peasant women feel that their needs and welfare have been forgotten by the new black elite. They feel betrayed. And so do many former combatants (male and female) who occasionally (out of frustration) threaten a "second revolution."[48] Some of these former guerillas heckled Mugabe at a Heroes Day rally in Harare in August 1997.[49]

SOUTH AFRICA

In South Africa, the release of Nelson Mandela from prison in February 1990 was understandably an emotional event for Africans everywhere. Apartheid, so it seemed even for that moment alone, would now be destroyed and a new just society

created. Mandela, in reflecting on the twenty-seven years in prison, would refer to them as "long, lonely, wasted years." For Africans in South Africa, the hundreds of years under colonial racist rule had not only plundered their country but also derailed their development through a process of systematic land alienation, political repression, and brutal exploitation of labor. The white settlers, in spite of their attempts to revise and rewrite South Africa's history, remained foreign exploiters. "Put simply," Magubane writes, "the settlers came to South Africa as robbers and enslavers and stayed as colonizers." Inevitably therefore, "The country belongs to the African people, both by hereditary right and through life-and-death labors extracted from them to build everything that the settlers claim as their own."[50] It is these points of ownership and exploitation that would prove vexing to the reconstruction of postapartheid South Africa.

By 1990, an accumulation of discriminatory legislation and economic policies had managed to produce a deeply divided society. "White South Africans ... reserved for themselves the best jobs, the best schools, nearly all [the] land and all political power. They bulldozed entire black suburbs, because they disliked having black communities living too near white ones. Those who resisted were treated viciously. Policemen gassed and whipped children at rally after rally in the black townships."[51] The prosperity and affluence that white South Africans enjoyed was built on the blood and sweat of Africans. It would not be historically accurate to characterize this affluence as being the result of "white ingenuity, enterprise and effort."

The crimes of apartheid are well known, and hence there is no need to recount them. It is, nonetheless, critical to recall that at the time of liberation, the whites (comprising 13 per cent of the total population), owned "an estimated 98 [per cent] of South Africa's capital. Even the carts from which Africans sell hot dogs on Johannesburg's sidewalks are mostly white-owned. The average white has ten times the income of the average African. And those figures don't tell the full story, since the African is

likely to be supporting many more family members and relatives on that wage."[52] How were African women affected?

Throughout the struggle against apartheid by Africans, African women, as already stated, made a critical connection between their grinding poverty and racist oppression and exploitation. This connection frustrated many Western feminists, who argued that African women lacked a feminist consciousness. Yet, as recent literature from South African black women reminds us, "it is not useful to characterise women who organize a bus boycott, mount rent strikes, or march against pass laws as lacking a feminist consciousness while at the same time considering the women who establish a group such as Rape Crisis, for example, to be sufficiently feminist."[53]

The dominant theories employed to analyze women's struggles in South Africa during the apartheid era, were Western in origin. This fact, together with the tendency by white women scholars to identify patriarchy (even capitalist patriarchy) as the chief source of women's oppression, has in effect, "served to silence many Black women and alienate them from mainstream feminist discourse."[54]

In their multifaceted struggles, African women fought for the integrity of their families. Family was a treasured institution. Unlike the white Western women, many of whom had arrived at the conclusion that "the family was the primary locus of their oppression," African women fought for "the establishment and maintenance of a family unit that included fathers and sons at home."[55] It is against this background of economic deprivation, social disintegration, political repression, and blatant unrelenting racism that the status of African women in apartheid South Africa must be analyzed.

The structure of Apartheid limited the employment opportunities available to African women. Those that were "gainfully employed" tended to work "in the agricultural and service areas, holding the least skilled, lowest paid and most insecure jobs"[56] like domestic work.

Domestic work, together with agricultural manual work have for long remained "the most important sectors of the black labour market in South Africa until the industrial revolution of the 1870s and 1880s gave priority to mine labour for men."[57] Most of the African women employed as domestic servants for white families are "migrant workers from the rural areas." They are mostly illiterate (or have minimal education). They have families in the rural areas whom they must support from their meager earnings. The work itself is "tedious and tiring. Workers start work early and finish late. They can be asked to babysit, make tea or run to the shops even when they are not on duty. The job usually includes cleaning, washing, ironing, cooking as well as looking after children."[58] Domestic work offers the clearest example of the racial character of South Africa's society. As in other racist/colonial societies, domestic service is performed by those deemed inferior. In South Africa's case, these are Africans. "Domestic service ... is generally looked upon in society as inferior, servile, low in status, badly paid; those who escape up or out, do so where possible. Conversely, it is the weakest and most socially subordinate strata who end up in the job: women, immigrants, ethnic minorities. In South Africa, the people who 'end up' in the job are African women."[59] Domestic work is extremely exploitative. It has generally been one of the lowest paid job categories, with "no set hours of work, leave or terms of contract." There is no minimum wage, nor is there protection from the tyranny of the masters. Isolated and vulnerable, many domestic servants have also been routinely sexually assaulted by their white masters.

By the 1980s, several organizations arose in South Africa "to deal with the domestic workers' problems." These included, the Domestic Workers and Employers Project (DWEP, Johannesburg); the South African Domestic Workers Association (SADWA, Johannesburg); and the Domestic Workers Association (DWA, Cape Town).[60] Neither of these organizations managed to overcome the isolation of the domestic workers and their lack of

legal protection. As a result, there was no official minimum wage for domestic servants in South Africa in 1990; nor was there a trade union to advocate for their interests as workers.

The employment of African women in the industrial and manufacturing sector was constrained by two crucial factors: education and legal residence in the urban areas. The provisions of the "Bantu Education" had significant long-term consequences on the Africans in South Africa. They specifically "excluded from the curriculum the classes necessary to prepare" Africans for "higher education and for higher skilled careers." African education was routinely underfunded. The result of these policies was that few Africans were able to attain high skills that would qualify them for nonmanual work. This was especially true for African women. Since the "Bantu Education" was not free, parents tended to "educate sons over daughters." There was a high drop out rate for girls. These girls would later migrate to the urban areas to work in subordinate roles in industry, commerce, or as domestic servants. The influx control legislation forbade "African women from the rural areas entering the urban areas."[61] Migrations to the urban areas in search of employment were therefore illegal, and many of these women secured these jobs as "illegal aliens." They lived in "constant fear of arrest." They worked without legal protection and hence were deliberately underpaid by unscrupulous employers.

African women rarely achieved professional status in industry or commerce. "Only a very small proportion" of them were "employed in manufacturing."[62] Most of them were concentrated in these industries: "food, textiles, and clothes and in lesser numbers in the shoe, electrical machinery, leather, paper and chemical industries."[63] Other African women worked in the service industry and "municipal services." As to employment and labor issues, it is now recognized that African women tend to occupy positions that other races deem inferior. "The general pattern has been that African women find a foothold in jobs out of which coloured and white women have moved, and for which African men are considered less suitable or more expensive."[64]

The living conditions for African women working in the urban areas (legally or illegally) were and are horrendous. Most of the monthly wage is spent on rent, and for most families "money never goes far enough. The need to pay for food, housing and transport always hangs like a dark cloud."[65] Lack of housing has led to the erection of "wendy-houses or garden sheds, commonly known as 'zozos' or shacks made out of corrugated iron." The rent for these overcrowded "zozos" is high. Insecure and unhygienic, these structures do not afford any privacy to families. Overcrowding has often led to family tensions and even abuse.

The majority of the African women in the urban areas by 1990 were unemployed. Some drifted to the "informal sector." This sector, "often romanticized," is, nonetheless, an insecure source of livelihood. "People earn their living by sewing, buying and selling, or running shebeens."[66] The economic return from the labor and effort expended in these activities has traditionally been insufficient to provide a decent lifestyle for individuals or their families.

The entry of African women into the trade union movement since the 1970s has largely been the result of these economic hardships and insecurities. In "a labour market strictly divided along racial and gender lines," few African women "could expect to move into semiskilled or skilled jobs." Trade unionism and, through it, collective action "offered the only real possibility of improved wages."[67] It should, nonetheless, be mentioned that "the number of women in South Africa who are organized in trade unions is still small."[68] Within the trade union movement itself, women found that they were subject to sexism. Most of the top leaders were men. Women activists were quick to observe that "their voices were not being heard" and charged the leadership with sexism.[69] By 1985, Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), "a national alliance" established the same year, "proposed affirmative action to include women in all delegations to union conferences, noting that although women constitute 36%" of its membership, "they make up less than 3% of the leadership."[70]

COSATU, in a bid to redress some of these critical issues, "established the position of full-time women's coordinator."

In the rural areas, the welfare of the Africans was closely linked to the rationale behind the establishment of the Bantustans under "The Promotion of the Bantu Self-Government Act of 1959." The theory behind this elaborate political engineering was to create homelands to which all Africans would eventually belong and leave "White South Africa." By 1970, under "The Bantu Homelands Citizenship Act," all Africans had to belong to a homeland "spoken language and culture." It is these political and economic aims that gave impetus to forced removals of Africans from urban areas to their "appropriate homeland." These would be "the surplus people." Under apartheid, these forced removals led to untold misery, family break-ups, deprivation and a degree of callousness rarely seen in the modern era. The policy of forced removals or relocation moved Africans "out of what is claimed to be white South Africa into small, impoverished and separate areas—the ten Bantustans in the countryside and separate group areas in the cities."[71] The government's aim was "to rid white South Africa of the unproductive, the unemployed, the disabled and those too young to work." Bantustans became dumping grounds for those unable to render useful service to the labor needs of white South Africa. These Bantustans lacked water, adequate or fertile land and industry. As a result, many of these "surplus people" were channeled to work as laborers on white commercial farms. Many of these farm workers were women.

Agricultural labor on white commercial farms was brutal, excessively exploitative with no legal protection. "Most workers were paid in kind (for example, a bag of maize)," for working an average of 60 to 70 hours a week.[72] Hazardous working conditions included "farm machinery accidents and poisoning by agricultural chemicals." Beyond this backbreaking work, women workers also faced sexual assault by the farmers. Although by the 1980s women were taking on jobs previously done by men, they were still paid less than African men laborers.

The health of rural women continued to be "poor and bleak." Since medical care was not free, many women rarely received "proper maternity care" or routine medical check-ups. "The hospitals and clinics that do exist are overcrowded and understaffed. The hospitals are far away. People must think carefully before they go."[73]

It is, therefore, not surprising that under these conditions of economic deprivation, social dislocation, and general racist oppression that "Thousands of women in rural South Africa are given long term drug therapy as psychiatric outpatients."[74] For these African women (and men), the end of their plight as a people and as individuals was intricately linked to the demise of apartheid and the release of Nelson Mandela and other political leaders from prisons and the return of exiles. Majority rule was the hope for the Africans.

After more than ten years of sustained political protests, economic sanctions, a faltering economy, and an inability to manipulate the usually reliable international community to their advantage, the rulers of apartheid opted for a compromise. It was clear that by 1989, the state was unable to subdue African protests and struggles for liberation "in the townships" and other areas. For many whites, especially the liberals whose voice grew stronger in the waning days of apartheid, political reform would avert a catastrophe—an economic catastrophe. Apartheid had conjured up a vast bureaucracy that weighed down the economy. Apartheid had repressed the talents of black and brown South Africans, who were given poor education and forbidden to own property or perform various skilled jobs. Apartheid had poisoned industrial relations and fostered anarchy in the black townships, so that businesses were crippled by absenteeism and strikes. Worst of all, Apartheid had saddled South Africa with Western governments' economic sanctions, and with the even more debilitating flight of private businesses and banks.[75]

The business elite in South Africa, the bedrock of apartheid economics, saw the ongoing struggle in strictly economic terms.

To this end, they sought for and received several meetings with the top leadership of the ANC—the dominant African political party. "For the status-conscious, hob-nobbing with ANC notables in a front line venue became a treasured badge of distinction."[76] It was noted that at these meetings, some open and others secret, "both sides fell over each other to make friends." By 1989, when events in Eastern Europe and subsequently in the Soviet Union, led to the fall of several "Marxist governments," South Africa was about to "embrace change." The calculation of de Klerk's government was that "with the cold war over, white South Africa could afford to let the ANC win an election. After all, without a Soviet Union to fund its socialist schemes, the ANC would be forced to emasculate itself once in office."[77] The suffocating message in South Africa and in the West in the wake of the events in the Soviet Union was that socialism had failed. Again and again, this was repeated and offered as an irrefutable truism. How did the ANC respond to external and internal pressure? How did the ANC redefine itself after 1990?

Throughout its existence, the ANC remained "a mixed bag of political tendencies." Its most celebrated document, the Freedom Charter of 1955, hinted at state intervention in economic reconstruction, by declaring: "The mineral wealth beneath the soil, the banks and monopoly industry shall be transferred to the ownership of the people as a whole. All other industry and trade shall be controlled to assist the well being of the people." On the land question, the Freedom Charter stated: "Restrictions of land ownership on a racial basis shall be ended, and all the land redivided amongst those who work it, to banish famine and land hunger."[78] Deliberately vague on strategy, the Freedom Charter defined the struggle for South Africa "as not against whites themselves but against the racist system of white domination. The anti-apartheid effort thus could unite all opponents of that system under ANC leadership."[79] The provisions of the Freedom Charter, however, refrained from advocating for a full-scale radical transformation of the South African society. There were hints of "mild socialism"

and strategic state intervention in some aspects of the economy through some nationalizations and economic planning. Beyond this document, the ANC had not, by 1990, produced any "comprehensive, operational blue print for the post-apartheid economic order."[80] Because of this lack of thorough and detailed reflection about post apartheid economics the ANC became captive and then succumbed to the several doctrines endorsed by the international and local business elite. All these doctrines advocated for the "market system," i.e., capitalism.

South Africa's largest corporations, traditional exploiters of African labor, "commissioned a host of business advisory groups, university linked 'think tanks,' and private consultancy firms to fashion futuristic forecasts about where the 'new' South Africa might be heading. These teams of experts took the lead in formulating market-driven growth strategies that specifically excluded various types of state intervention, including 'nationalization' as useful mechanisms for carrying out the redistribution of material resources on a non-market basis."[81] Continuing the strategy of "educating the ANC leadership on economic matters," the local business elite joined the IMF, the World Bank, the Development Bank of Southern Africa, and the Consultative Business Movement in urging the liberation movement "to abandon its strategy of inward industrialization in favour of export-oriented growth strategy."[82] Macroeconomic populism had to be abandoned. It led to inefficiencies, a bloated bureaucracy, and excessive social spending. It would also be unable to provide the friendly business climate that was critical to attracting capital for investment.[83]

On an individual basis, the business elite invited many top ANC leaders for "a weekend in the country or a flight in a corporate jet. Industrialists seduced the movement with the glamour of their power."[84] Within the ranks of the ANC leadership, the moderate and centrist forces assumed a higher profile and authority and played a crucial role in fashioning the strategic compromise with de Klerk's government. "In an era of multilateral negotiations and high level compromise ... the radical ideas that

accompanied the 'politics of confrontation' during the 1980s, seemed strangely out of place."[85]

In 1994, the ANC unveiled its economic and social doctrine. It was called the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP). In all essentials, it accepted the supremacy of the "market forces." Adhering to all the warnings delivered to them about the dangers of "macroeconomic populism," the leaders of the ANC fashioned a policy directive that accepted "the rules and protocols of market driven orthodoxy." The emphasis was on growth, i.e., "redistribution through growth." The ANC had accepted the assessment of the business elite that the problem at hand was essentially "a welfare problem that could be addressed through redistribution of social surplus rather than as a problem linked with the logic of capitalist production itself."[86] Addressing the Forty-Ninth ANC National Conference in December 1994, Mandela affirmed that "the question whether to expand state involvement or to privatise or sell some of the assets and enterprises depends not on ideological imperatives, but on the balance of economic necessity."[87]

The ANC, through the RDP, opted to find solutions within the existing structure and base. This structure was still administered by the old white-dominated civil service "premised on previous values and norms." It was also a corrupt structure. This was especially true toward the end of apartheid, when senior (and junior) white civil servants engaged in "rampant pillaging of public funds."[88] Solutions had to provide employment to "5 million unemployed," to "7 million without real housing," and to eradicate massive poverty, crime, insecurity, illiteracy, and landlessness. Was the RDP capable of delivering "work, bread, water and salt for all," as Mandela had promised in his presidential inaugural address?

A basic handicap that the ANC-led coalition government faced in 1994 was that "business enterprises, large and small, remained firmly in private hands."[89] The government's economic doctrine while acceding to the property rights of the

business elite and their allies, was charged with "jump starting a stalled economy" without violating "existing property relations" enshrined in the Bill of Rights. The focus of the RDP was the urban areas. The ANC doctrine focused on "urban housing, schooling and industrialization." At its 49th National Congress, the ANC explained this strategy this way: "Owing to its strategic location and capacity, the main social motive force for transformation is the working class. We reassert our historic bias to this class, and the rural poor."[90] This strategy of favoring the African urban residents over the rural populations is strangely similar to that pursued by the apartheid regime. In its effort to "divide and rule," the apartheid regime had, by the late 1970s, come to "favor the permanent urban dweller at the expense of the increasingly impoverished rural population."[91]

In postapartheid South Africa, this strategy—the cornerstone of the RDP—had basic flaws. The RDP did not focus on rural areas, especially not on agrarian transformation. Without agrarian reform that involves land transfers to African households, it is unlikely that there can be verifiable rural development. Land redistribution to small holders "coupled with a massive bottom-up rural employment program to put people to work and increase rural production across the board," will have the distinct value of "combating rural poverty and underemployment, household food insecurity and moderating the flow of migrants to urban areas."[92] Part of the problem in South Africa is the "prevalent wisdom" that white commercial farmers produce "a national food surplus, year after year, except during periods of exceptional drought." This factor, it must be reiterated, has been unable to feed the rural poor or the urban poor or accelerate African participation in commercial food production. This bias against African small holders is unfounded. Small holder farming in China, for example, has been a resounding success. It is, hence, legitimate to ask, "why is the agricultural growth rate of South Africa's commercial farm model only one-third of that of China?"[93]

Rural poverty has not received the degree of serious consideration that it deserves in the RDP. It is worth remembering that "South Africa's urban crisis cannot be solved by improving housing and social services. In fact, improved urban social services may increase the flow of rural to urban migrants. Likewise, the rural poverty cannot be solved after the rural poor end up in urban squatter camps."[94]

The biggest African supporters of the RDP are the "black propertied classes, along with the professional and managerial middle class, small traders and the newly skilled clerical and supervisory working class."[95] The black middle class, with a fascinating history, has traditionally pursued its own economic interests even during the apartheid era. African businessmen avoided agitating for political reforms while seeking for accommodation with the apartheid regime on economic issues. "Individually members of this class have been actively engaged in state established local government structures and in business enterprises with white capital."[96] The RDP afforded this class an opportunity to rise in the system that had traditionally excluded Africans as key players because of racism. This outcome, however, "left in the cold" the bulk of the Africans—women, children, the "working poor," and all others living on the margins of the system.

In the period after the unbanning of political parties and the resumption of open political activities by Africans in 1990, the women of South Africa formed a multitude of organizations. These organizations reflected the complex class and racial composition of the South African society. Some of these organizations included the Women's National Coalition (WNC), initiated in 1992. The ANCWL had been officially relaunched in 1991.

During the liberation struggle, the ANCWL had, like the ANC, placed the liberation of South Africa from apartheid rule as the supreme objective. Yet it should be remembered that the ANCWL had constantly seen the need to mount "two liberations"; national and gender. "We have realized from observing the experiences of other struggles, even from those of our neighbours

in Zimbabwe and Angola," Mavivi Manzini keenly observed that "the question of women's liberation has to be addressed now, and not left to later when national liberation has been won. And we think that the best way of addressing it is to repeatedly raise the problems of women sharply, because they are usually dealt with in passing."[97] The ANCWL defined women's issues to include "the high cost of living, children in detention, education of women and children," and equality in raising children. Even before liberation, violence against women, sexual harassment, wife beating, and child bashing, rape (including date rape), lobola, and polygamy had all been identified by the ANCWL as critical issues that affected women's welfare and development.[98] By 1991, the ANCWL sought to have these issues included in the constitutional conference that ultimately produced the Interim Constitution, and liberation in 1994.[99] Specifically, the ANCWL recommended to the ANC that it should "designate 30% of seats on the National Executive Committee for Women." This recommendation, radical and even innovative, "was rejected as setting a dangerous precedent of a quota for a specific group. Certainly, given the possibility of demands by a multitude of groups in South Africa," this request was deemed inappropriate.[100] The ANC instead endorsed a resolution that adopted "affirmative action" as a strategy for redressing some issues related to power and underrepresentation.

Unlike the ANCWL, the WNC had no specific political party affiliation. It was composed of a cross-section of South African women with political, racial, and economic distinctions. The key objective was to forge some sort of unity of women, discuss central issues affecting them, and then "force open the doors of male domination." These efforts were to "ensure that women's rights are included in the laws and constitution of the 'new' South Africa."[101] From 1992 to 1994, the representatives of the WNC, "went to women in rural and urban communities, factories, shops, women's meetings" and collated "their demands, wishes, fears,

desires and ideas."[102] After discussions, often heated, the Women's Charter was adopted in 1994. What were its basic points?

The Women's Charter called for "shared responsibility and decision-making in the home and effective equality in politics, the law and in the economy," in protest against their "historic subordination and oppression."[103] These women wanted to influence the "shape and nature" of the new South Africa. The charter called for equal pay for women and an improvement in their working conditions. Some of these objectives could be achieved through affirmative action. Equality in marriage and family was endorsed as was the right of women "married under customary law to inherit from their husbands." On the more intimate issues of abortion, the charter stated that "women must have the right to have control over their bodies. This includes the right to choose to have an abortion or not." The charter railed against the media representation of women as "sex objects and housewives."

The activities and career of the WNC, nonetheless, highlighted some of the critical issues bedeviling the "woman question" in the postapartheid society. These issues revolve around class, race, rural, urban, profession, and linkage (or non-linkage) to the international Western-dominated women's movement. It is these problems and the complex questions about women's liberation that they give rise to that prompted women academics to hold "the first South African conference on women and gender" in 1991 at the University of Natal.

This historic conference attended by over 300 delegates from the USA, western Europe and southern Africa was largely dominated by white women academics. This factor determined the issues discussed and the efforts to resist "political agitation" at an academic conference. The few black women "seemed to have been invited primarily to witness exhibitions of hegemonic wisdom and to endorse whatever diagnoses and proposals that academically established feminists had to offer."[104] These established feminists "spoke for" the black women. It was a point that raised serious inconclusive debate at the conference. The racial

divide and educational privileges informed by the apartheid racial calculus has affected the relationship between the whites and Africans in academics. "It needs to be emphasized that the patterns of racial domination," Desirée Lewis has critically observed, "have determined patterns of interpretive authority in South African scholarship and research. The trajectory of South African historiography reveals a fundamental unity regarding the mastery of those who represent and the silence of the represented. This relation is a racial one."[105] This racial divide revealed a serious fault line in South African feminism. By casting doubt on the ability of African women to speak for themselves, white women academics revealed that "they had a vested interest in the silence of Third World and black women, the frequent subjects of their research."[106] These doubts further reinforced the racist notion that "Blacks may have emotions and display their experience, but cannot be credited with self-knowledge or interpretive control."[107]

In 1993, when South Africa adopted an Interim Constitution, none of these problems had been resolved nor even discussed in a meaningful detailed manner. The Interim Constitution reflected the fears and powers of its chief architects. It was long on protection of property and individual rights, but silent or evasive on economic redistribution and justice in favor of those traditionally exploited and oppressed ... especially the African women and their households. The Interim Constitution "guarantees equal protection under the law to all people and prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender" and also allows for "affirmative action programs" to theoretically redress past injustices.[108] The Affirmative Action clause is not to lead to revolutionary changes in the lives of African women, as it "merely makes the use of affirmative action discretionary ... and is only aspirational since it may take a long time to equip black women with the educational or employment skills needed to take advantage of affirmative action."[109] Neither the Constitution nor the RDP provides any specific details on the education of "black women and girls." Without

quality education—advanced education—African women are unlikely to "force open the doors of male domination."

In public service, a few African women have made important advances. In the Parliament, "approximately twenty-five per cent of the ... 400 seat National Assembly are women." Women are also represented in the provincial legislatures.[110] In the cabinet, Mandela appointed three black women: the Minister of Health, Dr. Nkosazana Zuma; the Minister of Public Enterprise, Stella Sigcau; and the Minister of Housing, Sankie Mthembi-NKondo.[111]

In spite of these changes and appointments, it was clear by 1997 and beyond, that "the initial optimism that greeted the unbanning of political organizations, and the release of political prisoners" had "faded away, and the prevailing mood in the townships, squatter camps and impoverished rural settlements" was "one of mounting confusion, fear and despair."[112] In these circumstances, the majority of African women and their households endured a life of economic deprivation and insecurity, social dislocation and powerlessness. South Africa, for all the changes written and commented upon, remained almost unchanged.

In his inaugural address, Mandela called for the creation of "a rainbow nation at peace with itself and the world." He also called for the creation of a new covenant in which "all South Africans, both black and white, will be able to walk tall, without any fear in their hearts, assured of their inalienable right to human dignity."[113] Dignity and security in the "rainbow nation" have stubbornly remained elusive, linked tightly to economic power. "Formal rights of citizenship," Murray writes, "do not ensure economic well-being and social advancement, political tolerance and stability, racial equality, and greater opportunity for collective escape from a social world filled with hopelessness and despair."[114] The white South Africans have not relinquished power. They are not likely to relinquish power under the current Constitution, or under the provisions of the RDP. "The bargain that the white oligarchy has struck is to trade exclusive political power for continued economic advantage."[115] This bargain

has involved a selective cooptation of the black elite into white-owned economic enterprises. In some sense, this is a continuation of the apartheid strategy of creating an "independent Black bourgeoisie ... as a bulwark against militancy" of the masses. In postapartheid South Africa, "many white-owned conglomerates are selling large pieces of their companies at reduced prices to investment groups led by well-known black political leaders."[116]

In 1996, Nicolas Oppenheimer, "scion of the family that controls much of South Africa's gold and diamond mining," signed a $900 million deal with Cyril Ramaphosa, formerly a leader of the Mineworkers' Union, and until recently the secretary-general of the ANC.[117] The consortium led by Ramaphosa "bought a big share of the nation's best known company at 11 percent below market value." What did Oppenheimer (and company) get? He bought security for this company. He bought "a shield against the potential hostility of a new black government for the decades it supported apartheid and profited from a cruel system using migrant labor."[118] Other African consortiums were led by Eric Molobi (Kagiso Trust) and by Dr. Nthato Motlana (New Africa Investments). These deals have produced a few instant African millionaires and created the illusion that there is an interracial capitalism.

With regard to the mining industry, it needs to be emphasized that it has done more to disrupt the lives of Africans, impoverish them and create a tight cycle of poverty that continues to afflict the women, men and children of South Africa than any other single industry. The destruction of the African family and the economic deprivation that African women have endured for over a century, is not limited to South Africa. The countries of Southern Africa and their populations have all contributed to the wealth and glitter of white South Africa. "For South Africa, the gold industry is capital par excellence; for its expansion and preservation everything was done, including the mobilization of labor from China and the whole of Southern Africa." The labor policies devised to make mining profitable using African labor were later incorporated into the rest of the society. "It is not an

exaggeration to say that many of the patterns of racial exploitation currently practiced in other industries can be attributed to the dominant influence of the productive relations first articulated and formalized in the mining industry."[119]

The perpetuation of gross exploitation of African labor in the mines (even with the incorporation of African consortiums as junior partners) penalizes not only the women of South Africa but also of the whole of southern Africa. In spite of the RDP, selling of shares to African consortiums, and other "realistic and responsible" initiatives, the majority of Africans and their families, by the end of the 1990s, still lived in poverty. They still lived "on cornmeal dinners. Their tin shacks still rattle in the rain. Jobs are still impossible to find."[120] The economy grew by a modest 2 per cent in 1997 "and produced no new jobs." Anger and frustration among Africans started to erode the support and popularity of the ANC. There was the ever-present feeling that the ANC, in its initial negotiations with the white oligarchy, had "given away so much without tangible evidence of reciprocity." In this volatile environment, characterized by failed policies and the inability of the market forces to deliver prosperity to Africans, the USA still counseled the ANC government to maintain the course. The U.S. secretary of the treasury, Robert E. Rubin, visited South Africa in July 1998 and "repeatedly endorsed" the government's economic policies.[121]

Socially, postapartheid South Africa remained a segregated society with very few bridges across the color line. "Though whites and blacks share the same country, most still live in separate, if not disparate worlds. And their experiences over the past few years have shaped what are perhaps irreconcilable outlooks."[122] The Truth and Reconciliation Commission appointed in 1995 has not and is unlikely to forge a national consensus on the burdens of the past. These burdens and their current expressions continue to influence the shape of present-day South Africa's troubled society.[123] Economic deprivation has led to desperation and has fueled criminal activities, which, in turn, has hardened social positions. The spread of crime and insecurity has had a devas-

tating impact on the African women. South Africa has emerged as a country with possibly "the highest incidence of rape in the world," mostly of black South African women. In recent years, the victims have been children (mostly female children).[124]

The concept of "a rainbow nation" entailed integration, racial integration. The terms and meaning of this integration were not clearly identified. What has emerged since 1990 comes very close to what Steven Biko called "artificial integration." Opposed to this superficial nonconsequential integration, Biko argued that "the people forming the integrated complex have been extracted from various segregated societies with their inbuilt complexes of superiority and inferiority and these continue to manifest themselves even in the 'non racial' set up of the integrated complex. As a result, the integration so achieved is a one way course, with the whites doing all the talking and the blacks the listening."[125] Like Anton Lembede before him, Biko was "against the fact that a settler minority should impose an entire system of values on an indigenous people."[126] It is worth noting that the ANC devised RDP and other pronouncements, have limited (if any) African cultural content, dimension, or specificity. The RDP defined the African problems in strict capitalist economic terms. The failure of its core strategy of "redistribution through growth" strongly points to the need for a redefinition of the South African revolution and the African's place in it.

CHAPTER 4

GLOBALIZATION AND WOMEN IN AFRICA

What is globalization, and how does its expansion and operation affect the welfare of women and their families in Africa?

In its current form, globalization is portrayed by its powerful supporters and theoreticians "as something new and startling—and out of human control."[1] Propelled by powerful economic forces, its triumph is seen as inevitable and resistance against it as both futile and misguided. The alluring and even "enticing images of globalization" showcase glamorous "slender yuppies of both sexes" as they "stride from airplanes into conference rooms in London or Zurich. Executives in company headquarters confer by computers with engineers in Frankfurt or bankers in Hong Kong, agonizing over how best to preserve the rain forests or develop a life-saving drug."[2] This is a world linked not only by commerce but also by the power of advanced technology, especially the computers. The integration of computers into commerce accelerates transactions as "trillions of dollars are flashing out as electronic impulses daily from the world's financial centers in London, New York, and Tokyo."[3] The glamour, advertisement, together with relentless portrayal in a variety of media and scholarship as an inevitable powerful force have all made globalization and global trade "a sacred principle of modern economic theory, a sort of moral dogma."[4]

Globalization has given rise to "a new market fetishism." This fetishism, resourceful and untiring, has essentially "anathematized all alternative ways of understanding democracy, history, and the rest of the world."[5] Consequently, markets are held to

be a more definitive expression of "the popular will ... than ... mere elections." It is markets that ultimately confer "democratic legitimacy."[6] There is hence no ideological neutrality in "market fetishism" or globalization. "Market driven" globalization holds steadfastly to the ideological position "that democracy and the free market are simply identical."[7] Socially, globalization "justifies predatory behaviour as the natural tendency of humankind." Accordingly, globalization imposes "no restraints beyond the ethics of respect for property rights."[8]

The theoretical and practical dimensions of globalization are best understood as being "both a description and a prescription." As a description, "in its most general sense, globalization refers to cross national flows of goods, investment, production and technology."[9] A critical point in the description of globalization is that the desirable "transcontinental ... trade" takes place "within a single integrated global market."[10] The operation of this global market in effect renders "national entities" redundant; it is hoped that this will ultimately lead to "the demise of the nation-state."[11] Meanwhile, making valiant efforts toward this end, "all the major political and economic decisions will ... be transmitted globally."[12]

As a prescription, globalization is modern capitalism's path and guide toward alleged eternal progress and prosperity for all. Operationally, it "involves the liberalization of national and global markets in the belief that free flows of trade, capital and information will produce the best outcome for growth and human welfare."[13] The unimpeded "free flows of trade," it is believed, will ultimately create "a world system ... the global village." This presupposition envisages the rise of a prosperous world characterized by "interdependence of nations, the shared nature of their economies, the mutuality of their interests and the shared benefits of their exchanges."[14] Above all, the emphasis is on the economic benefits of international trade; the "flows of goods and services, capital and people across national borders."[15] But is this a new development, as claimed by supporters and theoreticians of globalization?

International trade, i.e., "transcontinental ... trade," is an old phenomenon. Certainly, since the fifteenth century, countries and peoples of Asia, Latin America, and Africa have been linked to Western Europe and North America through varieties of international trade. It is safe to argue that since the fifteenth century, the countries and peoples of what came to be known as the third world have been an integral part of the world economy.

During this long and eventful period, "Spain, Portugal, England, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Italy and later the USA and Japan rearranged economic activity in much of Asia, Africa, and Latin America."[16] This "rearrangement" specifically included plunder; and also the deliberate sabotage, then destruction, of the textile industry in "Persia, India, the Philippines and other lands" that "had quite advanced textile centers that were undercut by colonial trade."[17] There was also the Atlantic slave trade, one of the early and significant examples of international trade in recent history. Slave trade is important not simply because of the enduring pain, suffering, and humiliation inflicted on its victims and their ancestral lands but also for having been a lucrative source of capital that was indispensable in the industrialization of the West.[18] "The industrializing countries," in turn, "looked overseas for raw materials and food stuffs, and also for new markets for their output, and they invested heavily."[19] Thus, there could have been no industrialization without globalization. According to the World Bank, "the first wave of globalization took place from 1870 to 1914."[20] This age of Western industrialization is also of course the period of modern imperialism.

Under colonialism, the agricultural exploitation of the colonies for "cotton, sugar, coffee, cocoa, tea, bananas," other tropical products, and minerals was intensified. In many cases, the establishment of "plantations growing these commodities" was "carved from forests"; colonial commercial agriculture marked the origins of environmental degradation in these lands.[21]

This overwhelming evidence of extensive international trade, commerce, and investment prior to the 1980s has failed to deter the theoreticians of current globalization from arguing that it is indeed a radically "new epoch" in international politics and economics. The basic theoretical claim is that "the organisation of sovereign, territorial nation-states is gradually submerging beneath new kinds of (non-territorial) linkages."[22] This new system is destined to supplant the now doomed "Westphalian system," which is "the present-day international system composed as it legally is of sovereign, independent states."[23]

The Westphalian system, based on the legal and territorial framework of "The Peace of Westphalia in 1648," is interpreted by theoreticians of current globalization to have given rise to "a world of sovereign political units, asserting absolute, inviolable jurisdiction over bordered territorial spaces."[24] But is this true? Was it ever true? Is this how international economics and politics were ordered prior to the era of current globalization, which began in the 1980s?

Between "mid-17th century to the mid-20th century," when the Westphalian system is supposed to have been triumphant, there developed several significant "supraterritorial relations"[25] in commerce, trade, and politics. There was, for example, the rise "in England of industrial capitalism"; a development that produced several transnational and transcontinental economic and political outcomes, including modern imperialism. At other times, these "supraterritorial relations could and did go on expanding without, however, contradicting the territorial sovereignty" of the affected nations.[26] At other times, the territorial sovereignty of several nations, especially those in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, was profoundly violated. It is, therefore, inaccurate to argue that prior to the 1980s the world was composed of nation-states that enjoyed equal inviolate sovereignty.

These different levels of sovereignty still characterize current international political economy under globalization. Thus, "the principal supporter" of globalization "is the hegemonic state ...

in the ascending countries within the world economy." Because of "its superior competitive position," such a dominant state has "little to fear and much to gain from opening the economy."[27]

On the other hand, globalization has forced a redefinition of the state in the third world. Lacking sovereignty, especially over crucial economic issues, the state has in effect become a labor-recruiting and disciplining agency. "The state ... is judge and police and not much else"; it "keeps cheap labor in line and represses dangerous legions of those without work."[28] Divested of responsibilities for social welfare and development, "the state takes charge of public security; everything else is left to the market. And where the police can't handle it, poverty—poor people, poor regions—is left to God."[29]

One of the significant byproducts of current globalization is the emergence of the coopted state; coopted to unapologetically and openly serve the interests of imperialism. This means "to assist corporate-led globalization and pursue policies that enhance the ability of corporations to move their products, money, and factories around the globe more quickly and with less impediment from regulations."[30] The state, therefore, remains indispensable to the operation of globalization. This is especially true in the negotiation and enforcement of trade agreements and regulations that govern current globalization. It is the nation-state, "as in the past," that "is the principal political instrument for organizing global expansion."[31]

Clearly, the "new feature" of current globalization is the volume and scale of goods, commodities, and services traded across national borders. Specifically, there is far "greater volume of capital" and "financial transfers" that "far exceed past movements."[32] This has been partly facilitated by the "new electronic technologies." Closely linked to this is the fact that capitalism, or the free market economy, "has spread everywhere and is the only economic system at the moment."[33] This has been the reality since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. But do these new characteristics in themselves represent a "new epoch" in interna-

tional trade, commerce and politics? Does globalization signify a new form of relationship between nations, a form different from past interactions? And finally, does globalization "identify something not already explained by other concepts...?"[34]

Available historical evidence clearly indicates that "the deep ideological principles underlying the global economy are not so new; they are the very principles that have brought us to the social, economic and environmental impasse we are in."[35] On balance, globalization does not represent a "new epoch." Rather it is, after all, "basically a continuation of the past, an amalgam of new developments that can be understood through existing categories of capitalist development."[36] The old networks of Western exploitation and domination of the third world still remain intact. The existence of these networks of exploitation invalidate any claim toward the "shared benefits of their exchanges," or even the "mutuality of their interests," between the West and the third world. Pointedly, "the structure of international flows of income, investments and royalty payments does not correspond to any notion of an interdependent world."[37]

What is clearly evident is that current globalization affirms the structure and operation of imperialism. Globalization has not only facilitated the "domination and exploitation by imperial states and multinational corporations and banks of less-developed states and labouring classes" but has also ruthlessly ensured the "unidirectional flows" of economic benefits "towards imperial based corporations."[38] Theoretically, and especially operationally, globalization has to be seen as being essentially imperialism.

Of related interest are the questions about "technological determinism" and whether technology has in fact democratized globalization. There is little doubt that technological innovations, in computers, electronics and transport, have facilitated the seemingly rapid expansion of current globalization. It is vital to remember that in the West, many of these technological innovations "are based on state-sponsored or subsidized research, later transferred to the private sector."[39]

Technological innovations have been eagerly adopted by globalization to advance the economic interests of capitalism, namely: "capital accumulation, high rates of return, greater market share and lower labour costs."[40] In the core relationship between the West and the third world, these innovations have not erased the painful reality of exploitation and domination. Technology has not led to liberation. What has instead been observed is that "pre-existing economic forces determine the application of technology."[41] Lastly, it is worth noting that technological innovations did not, on their own, create the political economy of globalization.

The existence of globalization is neither inevitable nor inexplicable. It is quite simply "the outcome of deliberate choice." A basic error would be to look at it and the "market structures that are basic to our world" today as being "natural or inevitable, always latent and waiting to be 'opened up.'"[42]

The most elaborate justification for globalization and its supposed inevitability originates in "the imperial countries." Here, an assortment of "corporate leaders and their allies in government," together with journalists, "academics and publicists linked to the international circuits ... manufacture the theories and concepts that can be used to justify and prescribe globalist programs, strategies and tactics."[43] The cumulative appraisal is consistently optimistic, "even utopian." Globalization has come to assume invincible, almost magical powers; "a panacea for our ills."[44]

Crucial to this discussion is the role of academics, in a variety of disciplines, at some of the most "prestigious universities of the imperial countries." For "lucrative consultation fees," these academics are routinely employed by international financial institutions to "shape the economic programs" of "dominated countries" in order to "maximize the interests of global capital."[45] Lucrative consultancies provide some of these academics with an opportunity to stand on the dais of power and prestige in the service of imperialism.

In the third world, the role of popularizing globalization and its exacting demands is often left to the state. Joining in this enterprise are the economic and political elite representing "Agro-business and financial groups, importers, mineral exporters, and big manufacturers for export markets or subcontracted sweat shop owners."[46] This elite, tiny and often insecure, generally own "most of their nation's industrial, commercial and financial enterprises."[47] It is clear, however, that members of this local elite are very minor players in the definition, organization, and operation of globalization. At the global level, the consistent fact is that "the West has driven the globalization agenda, ensuring that it garners a disproportionate share of the benefits, at the expense of the developing world."[48] The major organizations supposed to facilitate and regulate international trade, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT), for example, have traditionally been dominated and controlled by the West.

The WTO, crucial to the operation of current globalization, "was designed as a meeting place where willing nations could sit in equality and negotiate rules of trade for their mutual advantage, in the service of sustainable international development."[49] None of these lofty goals has been realized. What has been observed in practice is that this organization has become "an unbalanced institution largely controlled by the United States and the nations of Europe and especially the agribusiness, pharmaceutical and financial-services industries in these countries."[50] Contributions by countries of the third world in the shaping of crucial policies governing the WTO remain, at best, very minimal. "At WTO meetings," Tina Rosenberg writes tellingly, "important deals are hammered out in negotiations attended by the trade ministers of a couple dozen powerful nations, while those of poor countries wait in the bar outside for news."[51]

It is this power, political, military, and economic in nature, that the West has vigorously and consistently marshalled to effectively force "most countries in the world" into lifting "barriers to

trade in goods and services over the last two decades."[52] What "goods and services" are traded under current globalization?

Western products dominate the goods "traded across borders." They include cars, trucks, car parts, textiles, footwear, clothing, machinery, electronic goods, aircraft, pharmaceuticals, and paper. To this list must be added oil, petroleum products,[53] and food. As for services, we have tourism and travel, communications, computer and information services, advertising, legal services, and all forms of entertainment.[54] Current globalization has placed great emphasis on the "expansion of primary commodity exports not only from Africa, but also from all over the Third World," to ensure that these countries pay off foreign debts.[55]

Beyond this legal trade, there is a large, vibrant and very profitable international trade that "does not appear in official trade figures because it is illegal."[56] There is trade in drugs, weapons, people, endangered animals, and toxins (hazardous materials). Advances in communications, transport, and especially financial transactions have all "made it easier to transport illicit drugs and launder the proceeds." Although rarely discussed nor critically explored, this means that "the most prestigious banks launder the most drug money and harbor the most stolen cash."[57]

Human trafficking is perhaps the most troubling of all the types and forms of illegal international trade. Increasingly, the main victims of this trade are women, especially young girls. The majority of them are sold into prostitution by organized criminal gangs. The United Nations Organization (UNO) has recently estimated that human trafficking (mostly of women) annually produces "profits to criminal groups of up to $7 billion."[58] The sale of poor young girls into prostitution, callous and ruthless, has in fact become "the new slavery." These girls are bought by brothel owners who proceed to maintain "control and ownership" over them through violence.[59] Brothel owners become slaveholders and "have all the benefits of ownership without the legalities." To brothel owners, having no "ownership papers" is in fact preferred "because they get total control without any

responsibility for what they own."[60] The sale of these poor girls into prostitution relegates them to the category or "disposable people" under globalization.

The profitable existence of "the new slavery" raises some very uncomfortable questions about the humanity and even the morality of globalization. This is relevant since one of the key claims of current globalization is that it is "a friend of the little guy," looking out for their interests.[61] Further, supporters and theoreticians of globalization have been adamant in their claim that this system "operates on a rational basis on our behalf and that the people in charge have benevolent motives and know what they are doing."[62] But do they? Does the market economy generate social and economic morality or even "the generosity of spirit that used to be taken for granted as the essence of civilized behaviour?"[63] Available evidence strongly indicates that successful individuals (or groups) under the market economy have "not necessarily" been "the most virtuous, hard-working, or clever. That is, the world economy has not been a particularly moral arena."[64] As examples of this fact, we are reminded that throughout the history of the market economy "slavery, piracy and the sale of drugs have often been much more profitable than the production of food crops or other staples."[65] How is this related to Africa?

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To comprehend the diverse impact of globalization on Africa (especially on its women and their families), it is vital to see the role that political and economic policies play in determining the welfare of a society and its people. This is especially critical if these policies are externally derived and the affected society had minimal role, if any, in their determination.

In the 1980s, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) "became the new missionary institutions, through which these ideas" of globalization and market fetishism "were pushed on the reluctant poor countries that often badly

needed their loans and grants."[66] By the mid-1990s, these institutions had virtual unchallenged control of Africa's development agenda; "virtually every country in Africa" had "been forced to come to terms with the World Bank."[67] What was the nature and impact of this agenda?

It should be noted that neither the World Bank nor the IMF were newcomers in the arena of African economic development. Both financial institutions had well-established linkages to most African countries that predated current globalization. The World Bank in particular had been instrumental in fashioning several plans and paradigms for Africa's economic development. These included the now discarded "economic take off and then ... targetting poverty" programs.[68] The failure of these paradigms to launch African countries into prosperity and sustainable development did not result in a reduced role for the World Bank in Africa. In the period after 1980 its role expanded to become dominant and unchallenged. This development illustrates one enduring fact: There are no penalties or sanctions levied against the World Bank (or the IMF) by the poor countries for erroneous advice, incorrect policy recommendations, or mismanagement that result in economic and social failure. "When projects, whether agriculture or infrastructure, recommended by the West, designed with the advice of Western advisers, and financed by the World Bank or others have failed," Joseph E. Stiglitz has observed, "unless there is some form of debt forgiveness, the people in the developing world still must repay the loans."[69] In their actions, both the World Bank and the IMF are fully aware that they are essentially untouchable, especially by countries (and even peoples) of the third world.

The latest paradigm under which the World Bank and the IMF have decisively intervened in Africa's development is the structural adjustment. This is an integral part of the agenda for globalization. The history of the imposition of Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) on African countries, goes back to the

1970s. Part of this history was touched on in this book in the analysis of postliberation Guinea-Bissau.

The Structural Adjustment Programs were the World Bank's response "to the deteriorating situation in Africa in the 1970s, which showed practically no growth in average incomes over the decade and an actual decline in per capita food production."[70] In its analysis of this deterioration in economic performance,[71] against the backdrop of the cold war, the World Bank was quick to exonerate Western external funding agencies from any responsibility for this outcome. Instead, it roundly blamed "the governments of African states, accusing them of gross mismanagement, faulty exchange rates, excessive state intervention"[72] in the economy and also of the problems linked to central planning and state expenditures on social welfare programs. Further, "rampant corruption that pervaded African culture were identified as the real sources of Africa's failure to be competitive."[73]

This analysis by the World Bank, conveniently sidestepped questions arising from "continued dependence of Africa's economies on traditional colonial exports,"[74] whose value and prices were externally determined. Specific to this period, was the significant fall in the prices of commodities, "while those of manufactured goods in world trade continued to rise."[75] To this must be added the devastating impact of "the oil price hike" on African economies in the 1970s "following the decision of OPEC in 1974 to restrict output."[76]

As prescription, the Structural Adjustment Programs were supposed to invigorate the economic performance of African and other third world economies; by making them "more efficient and better capable of sustained growth."[77] The expected outcome was "a sound economic and development footing."

It was taken for granted by the World Bank, the IMF and other Western funding agencies that Africans had mismanaged their economies. Linked to this was the presumption that the intricacies of sound economic management were probably beyond

the capacity of Africans; hence the need for Western technical aid. The relationship between the World Bank and the African countries and peoples was consequently mediated through a colonial paradigm; a colonial mind-set. This mind-set reinforced the "'white man's burden' and the presumption that" the World Bank and the West "knew what was best for the developing countries."[78] It is worth noting here that throughout the history of modern imperialism, the colonial mind-set, or the "white man's burden," has been intricately interlocked with racism.

Beyond promoting efficiency in economic performance, Structural Adjustment Programs also aimed at causing an ideological and cultural change in Africa. This change was, "at its core, a fundamentalist one which not only denies the legitimacy of alternatives, but has actively sought, over the past decade, to ensure that all of the options available to developing countries have been narrowed down to one[79]; namely, capitalism or the free market economy. This culture values individualism over communalism or communal initiatives. The net effect of this "tendency towards ideological homogeneity" was not only to promote the "notion of self-interest as the basis of market rationality" but also to seriously limit "the intellectual space for the consideration of ethical and equity issues in social interaction and international relations."[80]

In their policy recommendations through the Structural Adjustment Programs in the advancement of globalization, the World Bank, the IMF, and other funding agencies have continued to be guided by the economic theory of comparative advantage. This theory, which has become the cornerstone of the Structural Adjustment Programs and globalization, was first popularized by David Ricardo, "a British economist of the early 19th century." What does it mean? Current scholarship in economics characterizes this theory as follows: "A country has a comparative advantage in producing a good, relative to another country or the rest of the world, if the relative cost of producing the good, that is, its opportunity cost in terms of other goods foregone, is lower than it is abroad."[81] Not surprisingly, Ricardo

argued that a country should narrow its economic specializations to "those activities in which it excels, so that it can have the greatest advantage relative to other countries."[82] The theory holds that there are economic benefits in deliberately "abandoning certain industries and developing those in which" a country "has the largest comparative advantage"[83] relative to the rest of the world or its trading partners.

Accordingly, the World Bank and the IMF have, through the Structural Adjustment Programs, insisted that African countries "abandon import-substituting industries" so that they can "concentrate instead on expanding production of the commodities in which they enjoy a comparative advantage."[84] This theory nonetheless evades history in the analysis of the current regime of comparative advantage. It does not adequately explain the rise of the current Western-dominated economic system and the nature and value of the specializations that it has produced over the years. Nor does it address the critical issue of whether the roles occupied by different countries in the present system are essentially inalterable. Further, is participation in the economic system based on the theory of comparative advantage voluntary for all countries, and is there verifiable mutuality of benefit among all the trading partners? This indeed, remains one of the most controversial aspects of the debate on globalization. Even some organizations not readily identified as politically radical in the West have been troubled by the economic and social impact of the Structural Adjustment Programs. "After more than 15 years of International Monetary Fund and World Bank supported Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs)," observed the Phelps-Stokes Fund in 1997, "real economic growth continues to elude the African states."[85]

The details of the SAPs reveal an uncompromising ideological position consistently adhered to by the World Bank and the IMF, namely, "that less government intervention in the economy is better. More specifically, structural adjustment assumes an economy will be most efficient, healthy and productive in the

long run if market forces operate, and products and services are not protected, subsidized, heavily regulated or produced by the government."[86]

What are the details of the Structural Adjustment Programs? These details form the conditions attached to the structural adjustment loans from the World Bank and the IMF to African countries. They include the following: (1) "removing restrictions on foreign investments in local industry or banks and other financial services; (2) re-orienting the economy toward exports in order to earn the foreign exchange required for servicing the debt; (3) radically reducing government spending, including spending on health, education and welfare combined with wage reduction; (4) cutting tariffs, quotas and other restrictions on imports; (5) devaluing local currency against hard currencies such as U.S. dollar; (6) privatizing state enterprises; (7) undertaking a deregulation program."[87]

These conditions, wide-ranging in scope, remain to the present as "standard solutions" offered to all African and other third world countries by the World Bank and the IMF. In almost every case, these countries are "expected to follow the IMF guidelines without debate."[88]

The inescapable fact, however, is that the imposition of Structural Adjustment Programs has immediately caused social and economic dislocation, resulting in an extensive increase in poverty and misery for the majority of the people in the affected country. But this expansive impoverishment of the people, alongside social misery and desperation in country after country, have been unable to cause any fundamental revision in the prescriptions offered by the World Bank and the IMF. This pain and suffering, which constitute "shock therapy," is seen by these funding agencies as a "necessary penancy for the past inefficiency and mismanagement"[89] of the economy.

The pain and suffering resulting from Structural Adjustment Programs, are seen by the World Bank and the IMF as an inevi-

table and positive therapy that countries have "to experience on the way to becoming a successful market economy."[90] In order to be able to "reach the promised land of higher growth rates," a country must have the courage to complete the therapy by swallowing "the bitter pill of adjustment."[91]

In Africa, most of the pain and suffering issuing from "shock therapy" continues to be disproportionately shouldered by women. Their impoverishment, the result of Structural Adjustment Programs, has made them "most vulnerable to exploitation both at home and in the global labor market."[92] It is women's labor, deemed to be "the cheapest of all," that has been extensively used in "sweatshops in global cities and in nations of the periphery" to guarantee "maximum profitability for the corporate elite, a tiny minority of the world's inhabitants."[93]

Women's labor is preferred in sweatshops and similar entities because of a sexist position that identifies "docility, nimble fingers, patience" as qualities uniquely female and therefore quite valuable to globalization.[94] Such labor is cheap and obedient; unlikely to participate in labor stoppages to demand higher wages or improved work conditions.

Structural Adjustment Programs have forced African women "into additional forms of remunerative activities in order to survive as the farming of cash crops is consolidated into large, male-dominated and foreign owned estates."[95] This emphasis on cash crops has had a decidedly negative impact on the welfare of women and their families. "The necessity to acquire export earning to pay for manufactured goods from industrialized countries," George J.S. Dei critically notes, "has encouraged the development of export-oriented cash crop economies without achieving the necessary balance with food production for local consumption needs."[96]

A large part of the explanation for this regrettable outcome lies in the fact that globalization "has radically transformed land use practices and has also firmly established unsustainable devel-

opment practices on a global level."[97] As a result, local communities, and quite often even families, do not have "decision-making control over land." This power has passed "from local economies into the global economy."[98] This is true not only in African countries but also outside. In India, for example, women activists have pointed out that lands "formerly used to produce rice have been rapidly converted to shrimp farms and orange orchards" for export to Japan and the USA.[99] A similar story exists in the Philippines where, "lands not used for growing export commodities are 'developed' instead into golf courses and luxury hotels strictly for tourists' enjoyment."[100]

An unfortunate, though expected, development in Africa, has been the steady and unending rise of "landless agrarian classes." These landless peasants are partly the result of "export oriented agriculture," evicting "peasant families ... from their lands to make room for corporate farms."[101] In some cases, they are the product of a related process whereby "peasant farmers with small acreages are increasingly selling or renting their land out to larger-scale farmers and turning to agricultural wage labor or non-farm activities."[102] Both of these processes provide a nonromantic portrayal of globalization as it undermines the "economic capacity and social coherence" of peasant communities.

This struggle to survive in the face of constant erosion of economic security has forced "women as wives and mothers" to "adjust household budgets often at the expense of their own and their children's nutrition."[103] In those many repeated instances, when budget adjustments have been unable to pay for a family's basic needs, women have been forced "to leave their families and migrate in search of work."[104] In Africa, as in most of the third world, most of these women have migrated internally within their own country (usually to the cities) or regionally. There, they are employed in the sweatshops set up by giant multinational corporations or "in manufacturing and the electronic industry" or as house servants and maids. Some drift to "sex work or 'entertainment.'"

Those women who migrate overseas in search of employment to support themselves and their families often "work as servants, service workers and sex workers in the United States, Canada, Europe, the Middle East and Japan."[105] They occupy subordinate positions and perform menial jobs that unfortunately reinforce old stereotypes that are racist. In undermining the economic viability of African and other third world societies, globalization has in effect succeeded in creating a vast and cheap international servant class.

These general effects of globalization and the Structural Adjustment Programs on women are common to almost all African countries. In addition, there are consequences unique to each country. And even here it is useful to mention that separate groups of women are affected differently due to factors like class, access to land, level of education and occupation, region, religion, and even race in some countries. The intersection of these factors and the SAPs continues to affect the welfare and prospects for development of African women. This can be highlighted by briefly discussing their plight in a few African countries, namely: Senegal, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe.

SENEGAL

A key characteristic of Senegal's colonial and postcolonial economy is its overwhelming dependency on the production and export of peanuts. This monocultural economy, established and maintained by colonial economics, has failed over the years to launch a diversified and vibrant national economy. Senegal's economy, like that of many African countries, has been a weak and dependent one; dependent on the external demand of its peanuts and also on the climatic variables so critical in the production of peanuts. The extent of this vulnerability can be seen when considering the economic impact of the "recurrent droughts," starting in 1968, "that lasted for the next sixteen years."[106] The immediate practical consequence of these droughts was that peanuts—"as a percentage of total exports—dropped from 80 to 40 per cent."[107]

Apart from the droughts, the decline in the production of peanuts occurred at a period when the overall value of commodities produced in the third world for export had fallen sharply.

This development demands a qualification to highlight the economic and political weakness of the third world countries. These "producer countries simply do not know the final market value of their produce so as to obtain a proper share either by taxation or from joint ventures. Such secretly transferred profits are the normal practice of transnational companies...."[108] The seller and the buyer do not meet as equals nor do their business transactions adhere to the phenomenon of "transparency."

In Senegal, the production of peanuts for export had, by the 1980s, ceased to be "a viable means of productive activity" for many peasants. The result of this new and disorienting development was "a strong exodus ... swelling the slums of Dakar and its environs."[109] These persistent economic problems, together with the pressing need to "pay off the old accumulated debts," forced Senegal to accept the several SAPs, starting in the 1980s.[110]

The net effect of these programs and loans was to essentially discard "The social contract between the government and the population established during the Senghor era."[111] As part of the package for "the reduction of government expenditures," the government of Senegal "was obligated to remove subsidies on food items" and also on "utilities and transportation."[112] Further, the World Bank and the IMF insisted on a drastic reduction of jobs in the civil service. The established policy by which "traditionally the government guaranteed civil service jobs to all university graduates" was eliminated. There was also a severe reduction in "the fringe benefits" previously available to civil servants, for example, "housing and automobile entitlements."[113] SAPs produced a massive nationwide unemployment problem and social dislocation.

This is particularly true if it is acknowledged that "the unemployed are people, with families, whose lives are affected—sometimes devastated—by the economic policies that outsiders

recommend, and, in the case of the IMF, effectively impose."[114] Unemployment and impoverishment among those previously employed have had a particularly negative impact on the texture of social interactions and discharge of cultural obligations. The social and economic consequences of the SAPs have led to the "degradation of family and friendship ties" and, more notably, to the rise and embrace of "individualistic and opportunistic behavior."[115] In these circumstances, poverty is a clear threat to traditional kinship obligations that assume and celebrate values associated with the phenomenon of reciprocity.

Poverty has also affected the cultural and "ritual celebrations for births, deaths and marriages." There has been a marked rise in the tendency "to simplify or even eliminate family ceremonies."[116]

In the society at large, many families in Senegal have been forced by the prevailing circumstances "not to depend on the world economy or the national economy to turn around."[117] As a result, many women, "of all classes," are now involved "in trading on a scale never seen before."[118] Women from what may, for convenience, be described as the middle class "voyage to neighboring and far flung destinations to pick up goods to trade." Those with advanced educational and technical skills, "parlay their expertise into a contract with international non-governmental or governmental organizations."[119] But the struggle to secure contracts from these organizations as a regular means of livelihood, of necessity, discourages very critical appraisals that characterize globalization as imperialism and point to the fundamental and incurable flaws of the SAPs.

Poor rural women and working-class women "trade food they have grown or processed themselves for sale on the streets."[120] They also engage in "grain bulking, rice threshing, animal fattening, peanut oil processing, and selling of snacks."[121] Thus, many women are now engaged, for their livelihood, in the "informal sector." This sector, "has been variously defined as irregular, usually low paying employment in a variety of production, processing and marketing activities." Other than low pay and very

difficult working conditions, it is ordinarily "distinguished from the formal sector in that enterprises are not registered with the government and do not abide by labor laws."[122]

Partly to facilitate the participation of women in the "informal sector," a series of small-scale village banks were established by international donor agencies in Senegal. These village banks, established during the regime of the SAPs, "are premised on the idea that women given access to capital will invest in profitable businesses—that they will become, in effect,"[123] local entrepreneurs. The international donor agencies that funded the village banks believed strongly that "rural Wolof women, who have never before been granted economic resources by an extra local agency" would surely "invest their loans in income generating activities."[124] Did this happen?

Instead of becoming local entrepreneurs, many women members of the village banks chose "not to invest their loans in artisanal activities or petty trade but to invest in money lending."[125] These women became "cash patrons to their kith and neighbors" by effectively recycling "their capital as high interest loans" at the village level. The recycled, "re-lent loans" are overwhelmingly "used for consumption rather than income generation, which runs counter to donors' goals."[126] These banks have been remarkably ineffective in the eradication of rampant rural poverty. As exclusive organizations, with "a 50 member limit" per bank, they have consistently "excluded from borrowing ... the poorest of the poor." Their exclusion is "because leaders fear they will default."[127] But even the women moneylenders, members of the village banks, remain poor. Money lending has not pushed them into becoming "members of the richest households." These women are still "integrated into the large class of impoverished Wolof small farmers—not as the very poorest women, but as women whose families nevertheless lack sufficient capital, land, and other resources.[128]

While it is true that some Senegalese women "were able to profit from the new economic environment," the majority of

women and their families did not. "Women, by virtue of their preexisting position in society," Lucy Creevey has noted, "had fewer resources for their struggle to adjust."[129] A basic error would be to look at the few and even isolated success stories as an indicator of the overall positive impact of the SAPs on the welfare of women in Senegal. Indeed, it is fair to conclude that the new social and economic system, which placed no "emphasis on equity and justice," did not empower women. It did not enable women to achieve "more power compared to men and compared to women in previous decades."[130]

The impoverishment of women, which contributed to their disempowerment, was accelerated by the introduction of "user fees" in the provision of social services. "Social services formerly provided by the government" were no longer free. These services, which included healthcare and education had to be paid for as part of the conditions laid down by the SAPs. The painful reality is that user fees did not improve the quality of Senegal's health services. In most cases, there was a marked deterioration of quality. As evidence, "Public clinics and hospitals remain empty of basic medical supplies critical for the provision of decent basic health care."[131]

There was also a definite decline in the quality of available education. The reduction of government "educational expenditures" produced "double-shift and multigrade classes." This was the case even after the institution of new regulations requiring "the postponement of the beginning age of school from six to seven years," and the "reduction of compulsory schooling to only four years."[132]

Restricted access to education and training by Senegal's youth contains severe social consequences for the country. "As educational attainment is placed out of the reach of many children," especially girls, "growing economic and social inequalities will be marked by those whose parents pay for education and those whose parents cannot."[133] Young women growing up without education and specific skills "will not be able to compete in the

modern economy," thereby "reducing their life chances to escape from the poverty of the informal sector."[134]

In the meantime, the Structural Adjustment Programs have "wounded a generation of youth devoid of any hope for the future." These programs have also "exacerbated existing poverty; contributed to growing social ills such as drug and alcohol abuse, juvenile delinquency and prostitution."[135] The relationship between the government and the ordinary nonelite citizens has also been affected negatively; "many feel that the government does not care about them."[136]

What is indisputable in Senegal, like in other African and third world countries, is that "neo-liberal globalization has had injurious consequences for the life circumstances of all poor people but especially for women—often making their situations not only relatively but absolutely worse."[137] The struggle against globalization in its several manifestations, "is therefore a feminist issue, and developing alternatives to it should be a priority of feminist moral and political philosophy."[138]

MOZAMBIQUE

Prior to the imposition of the Structural Adjustment Program, Mozambique, under Frelimo's leadership, was in the forefront of those few countries in Africa which firmly held that "socialist politics offered a very real and positive alternative to the inequality and misery experienced in advanced capitalist societies and poor developing nations alike."[139] Frelimo had identified socialism, "as the best way to develop and modernize" Mozambique. In the decades that followed its political independence in 1975, a seemingly endless elaborate and systematic program of destabilization and destruction was inflicted on the country by Renamo (MNR) bandits. This program of destabilization, malicious and brutal, "led to near total destruction of the rural infrastructure and economic flow."[140]

This reign of terror and destruction created a haunting sense of personal insecurity among the population, especially the rural

population, who were often the main target of this violence. At the height of MNR's reign of terror in the 1980s, "the Frelimo government was incapable of maintaining normal conditions for survival in the rural areas."[141] The country now faced almost insurmountable political and economic challenges.

It was under these conditions of military vulnerability and economic desperation, the result of deliberate and well-funded destabilization, that Mozambique was forced to implement the terms of the Structural Adjustment Program in 1987.

The avowed and consistent aim of the Structural Adjustment Program was "to end any vestige of socialism and promote an intense capitalism" in Mozambique.[142] Frelimo's efforts toward the creation of "the alternative civilization," a socialist society, were to be dismantled under the watchful guidance of the World Bank, the IMF, and other Western funding agencies. It is useful to remember that "Frelimo's socialist development strategy" had been "formulated during the period 1975—77 in a climate characterized by a certain degree of international détente and a positive attitude towards independent socialist oriented development both in the Third World and among many liberal and social democratic regimes in Europe and North America."[143] This was no longer true from the early 1980s, when Frelimo's strategy "should have begun to be implemented." It is therefore fair to conclude that "both the escalation of the war" of destabilization "and the forced implementation of Structural Adjustment Programs were the result of international opposition to the socialist project attempted by Mozambique during the 1970s."[144] Indeed, the thrust and details of the Structural Adjustment Programs convincingly support this conclusion.

The immediate target of these adjustment programs was state-owned enterprises. They were promptly privatized. This project was so thorough and successful that Mozambique would later be hailed by "international financial institutions" as "the most successful in Africa" and hence "an example for others to follow."[145] The country was also forced to remove "controls on

capital movements ... private foreign investment and adhere to a completely open door policy."[146]

In the area of social services, the Structural Adjustment Program decreed that there had to be significant "reduction of state expenditures" on education and health. There was also cancelation "of state subsidies" on "other public services," for example, transportation. The majority of the population, especially the urban poor, was directly affected by the "increase in food prices." This was the result of "liberalization of food prices," which eliminated state subsidies in order to provide "incentives for the farmers to increase their food production."[147]

Besides economic restructuring, the Structural Adjustment Program also insisted on political restructuring; the formation of a national political system that would facilitate the implementation of the new economic structure and its values. Frelimo, therefore, had to renounce its Marxist underpinnings. In the new Constitution established after 1990, "Mozambique changed its name from the People's Republic of Mozambique to the Republic of Mozambique, and simultaneously a multi-party system was introduced."[148] Further, the new constitution firmly established "that the Republic of Mozambique has a market economy."[149]

Multiparty elections were held in Mozambique in 1994, then in 1999, and in 2004. This was an integral part of political restructuring with the stated aim of installing "good governance," accountability and transparency. What does the concept of "good governance" refer to in the era of globalization? Is it accurate to look at it as a definite advancement of democracy? "Good governance," Mbaya Kankwenda has recently explained, "... is understood to mean political regimes managing public affairs according to the world market creed and following the Western model. Any political regime able to carry out its economic and financial reforms effectively, to manage its incorporation into the world economy while controlling internal forces, is lauded to the sky even if it does not abide by all the rules of the democratic regime. This is because it has met the objective assigned to it by

the system."[150] Under these circumstances, "good governance" signifies Western ideological control of those countries under the regime of structural adjustment; control of structure, form, and details in order to determine the desirable outcome.

The unrelenting advancement and imposition of "good governance," Western political structures, assumptions, and values on countries under structural adjustment is explicitly informed by several crucial presumptions. Perhaps the most fundamental is that in Western societies there is readily evident a mass culture of vibrant politics, i.e., multi-ideological, informed, noncorrupt, and transparent; that "the people" are supreme and governments perform minimal functions and are accountable to the electorate. But is this true?

Available evidence strongly indicates that "many people have simply lost faith in politics" in many Western societies. "In all advanced industrial democracies," Noreena Hertz has pointed out, "the public is effectively detaching itself from party loyalty and disengaging from politics."[151] Why are large proportions of people "boycotting politics even in countries where democracy has a long history?"

Part of the answer lies in the realization by the people that the political system has failed and has even betrayed them. The ruling elite and politicians, as custodians of the system, are both unable and unwilling to fervently pursue public policy that could benefit the majority of the citizens in these countries. And so, "with governments, regardless of their political persuasion, increasingly impotent, or unable to intervene on their citizens' behalf, and seemingly having lost any sense of moral purpose, it is hardly surprising that the electorate is turning its back on conventional politics, even in countries that proclaim democracy as one of their greatest achievements."[152]

In almost all of these Western societies, as in the rest of the world, effective power is now lodged in the hands of corporations. Politicians and governments have, in reality, very minimal

power and influence. "Governments are now like flies caught in the intricate web of the market. And voters see their powerlessness.... They watch politicians dancing to corporations' tunes."[153] The most consistent part of the "corporation's tunes" is to affirm the supremacy of an unimpeded capitalism; thus offering "only one solution: a system based on laissez-faire economics, the culture of consumerism, the power of finance and free trade."[154]

This system, under modern globalization, has greatly diminished the power of representative politics. The result is quite plain: The "corporation is king, the state its subject, its citizens consumers." It is therefore not surprising that "politicians now jump on the commands of corporations rather than those of their own citizens."[155]

The political and social system in the West, the home of "good governance," has consistently failed to produce social justice, equity, transparency, and even accountability. As for social justice and equity, it is now painfully evident that "never before in modern times has the gap between the haves and have-nots been so wide, never have so many been excluded or so championless."[156] Accordingly, the glorification and then export of this system to all those countries under the regime of structural adjustment—on the pretext that it will lead to development, empowerment of the masses, and creation of social justice—is the advancement of an elaborate, annotated, and authoritative falsehood.

The impact of the Structural Adjustment Programs on development and expansion of social justice in Mozambique has been markedly disappointing. For the majority of the people, the Structural Adjustment Programs led to poverty and misery. Hence, "the 1980s and the 1990s were years of increased poverty, violence and misery for many Mozambican women."[157] In spite of being singled out for praise as a "model patient," the country was "still one of the poorest ... in the world in terms of GDP per capita...."[158]

Eager to attract foreign investment, as prescribed by structural adjustment, Mozambique "introduced incentives such as tax

holidays and absence of withholding taxes ... yet" it remained very "difficult to attract private foreign investment in the late 1980s and early 1990s."[159] A weak performance of the export sector of the economy resulted in a "deterioration of the trade balance."

It is significant to note that the Structural Adjustment Program failed to spur domestic industrial growth. For domestic industry, it became "increasingly difficult to find a domestic outlet for its own production. The reason behind this is that so few measures have been adopted to expand the domestic production structure, and the existing industry lacks sufficient strength to compete with the imported goods."[160]

There was, however, significant growth in the provision of luxury items to the "new rich" in the country. This remained a very tiny proportion of the whole population. Implementation and management of the Structural Adjustment Program led to "a building boom in Maputo, especially of the expensive houses," to cater to the tastes and status needs of the "new rich."[161] Also built at this time were expensive hotels, and even bakeries that "sold fancy decorated cakes." There was also "a South African financed supermarket and shopping mall."[162] These and similar investments projected a deceptive image of development and progress in a country that remained under the firm grip of immense poverty. What was, nonetheless, clear is that the Structural Adjustment Program had greatly contributed to "the widening gulf between the few who benefited from investment money and the vast majority who lived in extreme poverty."[163]

Thus, the availability of luxury items in shops to cater to the new rich, who "are ostentatious," was not an indication of robust national development and progress under the direction of the market system. On this question of juxtaposing luxury goods with poverty, Eduardo Galeano has shrewdly observed that "the free market has transformed the countries of the South into bazaars filled with imported trinklets that most people can see but not touch."[164]

Poverty, greatly exacerbated by the regime of structural adjustment, denied the majority of ordinary Mozambicans entry and participation in the new market economy; especially as consumers. And consumers, as it is well known, are a critical variable in the planning, organization, and administration of the free market economy. In Mozambique, "the majority of people" remained "so destitute that they" had "no purchasing power at all." Indeed, there was "almost non-existent market integration of 80 per cent of the population."[165] Still, it should be pointed out that at the national (and international) level(s), the life prospects of this large excluded majority continued to be determined by the economic and social theories behind the Structural Adjustment Programs. A large proportion of the excluded majority were women and children.

Many women, and their children, were forced to move "into Mozambique's cities ... to escape the escalation of rural violence." This development, unplanned and often chaotic, "proved difficult ... as conditions were crowded and the government was unable to deal with the rapid increase of demands on the urban infrastructure."[166] These difficult and challenging living conditions were made worse by the demands of structural adjustment.

In the urban centers, especially in Maputo, "women responded to the economic difficulties of the late 1980s and early 1990s by seeking out whatever income they could find, and many turned to petty marketing."[167] This was the expansion of the informal sector in Mozambique under structural adjustment. Which items were sold and traded? They included the following: "selling firewood, charcoal, and tins and bags of stones broken down to the size desired by people constructing buildings."[168]

Other women resorted to prostitution. Long identified by Frelimo as antifeminist, antifamily, and generally immoral, prostitution "had clearly made a resurgence" under structural adjustment. Besides adult women, there was also "evidence of street children relying on sex for survival. It was reported that some mothers demanded that their young daughters obtain food

for the family by prostituting themselves."[169] Related to this was the tragic "presence of hundreds of abandoned children living on the city streets." As products of economic destitution, social dislocation, and institutional failure to protect the young, these street children were vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. They were quick to utilize "begging and stealing on urban streets" as a means to survive. But this dangerous lifestyle also hardened them. "For many, the temptation of getting money in exchange for sex was unavoidable."[170]

Loss of access to social services, especially health and education, had an immediate negative impact on the welfare of women and their families. "When school fees are introduced and medical care is no longer free for the poor," Stephanie Knauder states, "no human security and not even a minimum of quality of life is guaranteed."[171] The introduction of school fees and other expenses, as stipulated by the Structural Adjustment Program, had an adverse impact on the enrollment of girls in school. "Families were more likely to keep children, especially girls, out of school when they could not afford the new higher fees."[172]

This unfortunate development was quite consistent with the pattern that had emerged in other African and third world countries under structural adjustment. "The expansion of female education" in many of these countries had narrowed the "gap between female and male enrollments." However, "these gains" were clearly "eroding due to the impact of structural adjustment policies."[173] Structural Adjustment Programs presented very limited options for economic and social viability, especially to poor families. "During periods of austerity," Claudia Buchmann noted, "low income households develop strategies to enhance income and trim expenses. These strategies may affect the education of girls before they affect the education of boys. When school expenses increase dramatically (as government subsidies are eliminated), parents may decide to keep their daughters at home." Therefore "if parents know that women have limited opportunities in the formal labor market, they may reason that

the benefit of educating their daughters no longer outweighs the expense. Moreover, daughters may be kept at home to help with the increasing amount of household labor. Thus, household strategies to survive during periods of austerity may inhibit female access to education."[174]

The quality of family life was further affected not only by general economic desperation and particularly poor housing, but also by the dynamics of the new urban culture, forged in poverty, that many new urban residents had to endure and adjust to. Many of these new residents were, for practical purposes, displaced rural dwellers ill-equipped to relocate and flourish in the urban areas. They had been forced to migrate to escape from the war of destabilization. Now, by the 1990s, they were escaping from the destructive impact of structural adjustment.

One of the unsettling characteristics of the new urban culture was the erosion of group solidarity. In "the process of urbanization," Stephanie Knauder informs us, "group solidarity is in many respects substituted by individualism. It can be assumed that if social integration is measured by the frequency of visiting and mutual assistance of relatives, friends and neighbours only, it decreases with the level of urbanization from the rural via peri-urban areas to the fully urbanized areas."[175]

For families, the consequences of this new urban culture were severely compounded by an acceleration in the flow of migrant labor. "Mozambicans migrated to South Africa to look for work, maintaining a practice of many decades."[176] This inevitably reproduced the phenomenon of female-headed households. Under the punishing circumstances of structural adjustment, this was an unusually heavy burden to bear. In some cases, "women also traveled to find work of various kinds in South Africa, though in smaller numbers than male migrants."[177]

Those women and their families who remained in the rural areas found themselves living under "a strengthened adherence to traditional society." Excluded and marginalized by structural

adjustment, the rural population had to forge strategies of survival that relied on the traditional society, and not market capitalism, for inspiration and rationale. "One example of this is that traditional health care has not just withstood ideological attacks against superstition and spiritualism, but has also strengthened its position in recent years at the expense of modern health care..."[178] This became especially true when healthcare, under structural adjustment, was too expensive and therefore unavailable to a large portion of the population.

Partly in response to these economic and social upheavals, many women in rural Mozambique sought solace in "independent Christian faith-healing churches." What was the attraction? These churches, which fused "Shona religious notions of illness causation with Pentecostal beliefs in the healing power of the 'Holy Spirit,'" were particularly attractive to "new members seeking treatment of illness."[179] In his thorough and informative study of "the recent rapid growth of" the African Independent Churches (AICs), "in the central Mozambican city of Chimoio," James Pfeifer arrived at two significant conclusions. First, women constituted "up to 75 per cent of AIC membership." Second, "that rapid church expansion has largely been driven by the intensification of economic and social inequality produced by structural adjustment policies and privatization implemented during the same period."[180]

In their teachings, the AICs promised to deliver ways to avert a breakdown in social order. This social order, as already noted, was now increasingly threatened by poverty and "growing inequality in Chimoio." Especially for women, these churches seemed to offer "a world of mutual aid and social support. Poor women with health problems appear to be joining AICs in response to their heightened social vulnerability amidst rapidly intensifying inequality."[181]

In principle and practice the Structural Adjustment Programs sabotaged Mozambique's efforts toward the creation of an egalitarian society. Also, more emphatically, structural adjustment

severely undermined earlier social recognition and ideological advocacy of gender equality. "The new political parties" that emerged in the post-1987 political landscape, "generally did not mention women's issues in their platforms, or they included only the most general platitudes with no actual program of action."[182] What about women's organizations? Could women rely on these organizations for vigorous advocacy, power, and influence in the changed circumstances in the country?

The imposition of structural adjustment policies on Mozambique led to a drastic change in the structure, responsibility, and influence of women's organizations. OMM was no longer the primary women's organization. Structural adjustment had given rise to "a proliferation of groups focused on issues of concern to women." A multiplicity of women's organizations did not, however, produce a large energized women's movement eager to celebrate the values associated with the market economy. Nor did these new organizations empower the Mozambican women by enhancing their decisive influence in the country. There were noticeable problems regarding funding and recruitment of members. By 1990, "OMM, along with other organizations, was proclaimed an autonomous organization, no longer dependent on Frelimo for its political direction."[183] But this also meant that OMM could no longer be funded by Frelimo. This political and financial delinkage subjected OMM to "serious problems in funding." There was simply no private funding, local or international, that OMM could rely on for generous and consistent support. "Finding private funding or relying on membership dues in a time of extreme economic difficulty was problematic at best."[184]

Partly in reaction to these political and financial difficulties, "OMM leadership abruptly decided to return to their earlier affiliation with Frelimo" in 1996. Still, it was evident that the organization of Mozambican women, now without reference to Frelimo and its initial Marxist ideology, had become a very complex and multifaceted problem. It is therefore not surprising

that "by the end of the decade it was clear that OMM was having problems organizing women."[185]

The overriding problems remained to be poverty, inequality, and powerlessness, especially of women and children. Poverty and a lack of commitment to gender equality constricted options available to women for economic, social, and political advancement. Poverty and powerlessness exposed women and children to gross exploitation and abuse by multinational corporations and other investors in the country. The conduct of Lonrho, the giant British multinational corporation, in Mozambique's cotton industry vividly illustrates this point. "In early 1996," Joseph Hanlon reports, "a group of health workers in Cabo Delgado were shocked to see the British firm Lonrho recruiting child labor to work in cotton fields, because adults were unwilling to work for low wages. Lonrho sent lorries to collect the children, 'some so young they could not see over the side of the lorry.' On the first day of school, some schools were nearly empty because the children were working in the cotton fields."[186]

A regrettable consequence of structural adjustment was the rise and escalation of "a high crime rate," especially of corruption. In her research, Stephanie Knauder concluded that "both were almost absent in the decade after the political independence of Mozambique in 1975."[187] Under structural adjustment, corruption now directly affected the provision of social services and the performance of public service. This, for example, could be easily seen in the conduct of "an ill-paid police, who must be paid by the victim to investigate a crime and can be paid by the perpetrators to lose the file."[188] A fall in wages, especially for "civil servants and many who think of themselves as middle class," led to the "proletarianization and impoverishment of the former middle classes."[189] The resultant inability to "feed their families" contributed significantly to the escalation in corruption.

Now, civil servants were "less often at their desk." Instead, they took "time off to do other work" that would aggregate and augment their earnings. This included attending "conferences

(for which they are paid an extra per diem by donors—often of a month's wage per day), or to do consultancies. Or they use cars and trucks for revenue earning activities. Or they simply steal."[190]

In sum, the Structural Adjustment Program had by 2003, failed to generate economic development, social justice and the empowerment of women. Mozambique was now nearly "the poorest country in the world." The market economy, imposed with much fanfare, had failed to reduce the high "rate of inflation." The country was still plagued with huge "public budget deficits" and an ever-expanding "dependency on foreign aid and credits."[191] Indeed, on balance, it appeared as if Mozambique was "now locked into a downward spiral of underdevelopment, in which the IMF, donors and Mozambique's own leaders unwittingly act together in ways that make most Mozambicans poorer."[192]

ZIMBABWE

Unlike Mozambique, and "many other African countries, Zimbabwe was not in an economic crisis situation when it adopted ESAP (Economic Structural Adjustment Program) in 1991."[193] It is useful to remember that prior to 1991, Zimbabwe under Mugabe's leadership, was hailed in the West "as one of Africa's most stable democracies" that had achieved improvements in social welfare while studiously refraining from adversely affecting the operation of the well-established market economy. "Following independence in 1980," there had been a burst of economic expansion partly due to "the lifting of economic sanctions and re-direction of the war economy to the betterment of the Africans."[194] By 1990, however, the economy had become stagnant.

The lack of economic expansion, especially in the manufacturing sector, had immediate political and economic implications. For Mugabe's government, the most serious of these was the steep rise in unemployment, especially of fairly educated young adults. It is nonetheless relevant to mention here that the manufacturing

sector had experienced a steady decline in economic performance in the late 1970s. It was never able to surpass, or even to repeat, its "main phase of expansion," which had occurred "between 1966 and 1975 ... in terms of both production and employment."[195] In the interim before 1991, many experts, especially "economists employed by the World Bank," repeatedly argued that the stagnation in Zimbabwe's manufacturing sector could only be resolved through the country's adoption of "an entirely different set of industrial policies"; export driven market economy.

These economists and experts were quick to condemn Zimbabwe's "state led import substituting industrialisation," since this "was not based in areas where the country's 'natural' comparative advantage lay."[196] Accordingly, in order to expand Zimbabwe's manufacturing sector, the country had to install, and embrace, an untethered market economy. This "new economy," would be characterized by "liberalized exchange rates, trade liberalisation, elimination of producer and consumer subsidies and price controls, labour law deregulation, and greater openness to direct foreign investment."[197]

A key attribute that made Zimbabwe particularly attractive to the World Bank and the IMF as a candidate for the structural adjustment is that it had "the most industrially developed economy in sub-Saharan Africa after South Africa."[198] This factor was supposed to turn the country into Africa's clear shining success story of structural adjustment. In theory, structural adjustment was "anticipated to be less painful in Zimbabwe," due to its relatively developed manufacturing sector and also because "the government did not have a heavy debt burden."

By 1990, in the eyes of the World Bank, Zimbabwe had the added advantage of being "politically stable," with "a competent bureaucracy." Further, "the country had developed markets and a comparatively good infrastructure." And above all, "the productive sector was largely private and profit driven."[199]

Initially, Mugabe's government hoped to be able to control the course of the structural adjustment. It did not want to appear helpless and clueless before the World Bank and other Western donor agencies. The aim was to make strategic modifications that would, in turn, significantly moderate the social impact of structural adjustment. "In particular," the government "rejected the type of 'global shock' therapy then being implemented in Eastern Europe in favor of a more gradualist approach to trade liberalization in particular."[200] This strategy did not succeed. As the country became more dependent on the World Bank and the IMF, these institutions seized the opportunity to impose their standard version of structural adjustment. Consequently, "Zimbabwean state's autonomy from IFS in directing reform decreased dramatically as it became more financially dependent on them."[201] What were the social, economic, and political consequences of ESAP? Specifically, how were the women affected?

The most dramatic impact of the structural adjustment on Zimbabwe's economy was that it failed to expand, or even revitalize, the country's overall manufacturing sector. Instead, it led to a disastrous deindustrialization.[202] In his detailed study of this question, Pâdraig Carmody found that "from 1994 onward, Zimbabwe's textile, clothing and footwear industries began to collapse." As an example, "Cone Textiles, one of the two largest textile producers in Southern Africa, closed with the loss of over 6000 jobs."[203] To be sure, a few large companies "particularly in textiles and clothing and paper packaging" benefited. However, quite clearly, "this restructuring was uneven in itself and its results. It did not really extend to small and medium sized companies."[204] Affected companies here included "low style content garment manufacture," an "area in which Zimbabwe was supposed to have a comparative advantage."[205]

Deindustrialization was also accelerated by "competition from 'dumping.'" This involved, among others, the importation of "very cheap, low quality textiles from Asia." This development drastically "reduced demand for textile from Zimbabwe's

over one hundred thousand tailors and dressmakers."[206] Some of these were women. "Dumping" led to the "death" of local skills and craftsmanship, which in turn produced a definite decline in income among these local "tailors and dressmakers."

As deindustrialization took hold, there was corresponding growth in unemployment. The sad reality was that, contrary to World Bank projections, "employment growth in the manufacturing sector was far below expectations of 3 per cent per annum, being minus 4 per cent in 1992, minus 4.8 per cent in 1993, and 7.8 per cent in 1994."[207] There was also massive lay-offs in the civil service; "some 25,000 posts were abolished in 1995, many of which were vacant and about 7,000 were actual retrenchments."[208] On top of this must be added the "runaway inflation."

Structural adjustment had "not only hurt the poor," but also "created the 'new poor' through its financial squeeze felt from every angle in addition to job losses." There is abundant evidence to demonstrate this expansion of poverty in the country. "In 1995," for example, "61 per cent of the Zimbabweans were poor, living below the total consumption poverty line . . . poverty levels were even higher in the rural areas where the majority of the population live."[209] During this period the government, as directed and required by the World Bank and the IMF, drastically cut its overall spending on health and education; "in part accounting for life expectancy falling from sixty-one to fifty-three between 1990 and 1996."[210]

The easily observable impoverishment of a large section of the Zimbabwean population under structural adjustment, created an explosive political problem for Mugabe's government. Prior to 1990, the government had pursued a deliberately inconsistent land policy. The result was that "less than 15 per cent of Zimbabwe's land, half of which was held by the LSCF and the state had been redistributed by 1990 to about 6 per cent of the rural population."[211] In spite of this rather "pitiful land redistributive measures," Mugabe's government had remarkably managed "to secure relative political compliance and relative peace" from the

population, especially the peasants. All of this changed as a result of the social and economic impact of the ESAP.

There were "unequal benefits from ESAP reforms, especially from new land uses." This inequality in benefits would directly "fuel the struggle for more land redistribution."[212] Under the ESAP, there was a definite "growth of new export land uses." This development quickly, and even traumatically, "led to a redefinition of Zimbabwe's land question through the promotion of qualitatively increased and intensifying rural economic differentiation among varied landholders and regions."[213]

This "explicit privileging of export oriented land uses," took many forms, "including markets for tourism, wild life products, new high value crops and the storage of biodiversity."[214] In the reallocation of "land use patterns" that followed, it was easily observed that "lands which had formerly been unused or underutilised, as well as land which had formerly been allocated for household and domestic markets," was now earmarked for "new export oriented land uses."[215] Key players in this complex and evolving drama were large white farmers. These farmers introduced "large scale shareholding combinations" and also "increased the practices or started reforms of subcontracting the production or buying of land-based commodities from small black farmers."[216] It is useful to mention here that multinational corporations alongside "donors, local banks and international capital were drawn into financing the land use conversion process."[217] This relentless pursuit of "export oriented land uses" was cumulatively achieved "at the expense of maize and cotton production, a trend which had taken root during the early 1980s, as peasants began to compete effectively in producing those crops."[218]

The ESAP had produced particularly disappointing economic results. And this now threatened the political legitimacy of the Mugabe government. To "the landless and some black elites," the ESAP had not only frozen but had actually reversed the national objective toward much needed land redistribution. The ESAP and the "new land uses" that it produced were seen as mere

"ideological tools used by the white LSCF sector for legitimising existing patterns of monopolistic land ownership or control."[219] As economic conditions worsened and poverty expanded "in an inegalitarian agrarian system," many "old and new poor" were disappointed to see "underutilized lands now being redirected towards external markets."[220] It is therefore fair to state that the expansion of poverty, the direct outcome of the ESAP, made the land question once again central to the political economy of Zimbabwe. It led the "rural and urban poor" to undertake, with militant vigor, what Sam Moyo refers to as "self-provisioning" of land. The political fall-out from this development would in time elicit, in the West, sustained voluble and even punitive protest. As evidence by Executive Order 13288, President George W. Bush of the USA, imposed economic sanctions on the leaders of Zimbabwe thereby "blocking the property of persons undermining democratic processes or institutions in Zimbabwe."[221] Also, Zimbabwe's suspension from the Commonwealth was "extended indefinitely" in a meeting in Nigeria in December 2003. This led Mugabe's government to "pull the country out of the Commonwealth altogether."[222]

Still, it is these poor peasants engaged in some form of "self-provisioning" of land that emerged as the new power base of the Mugabe government. The government, "with waning popularity" under the ESAP, had rediscovered the peasants. In the past, "the government strategy" had "been to offer a little bit of land and related resources to the black interest groups, and continually threatened to implement large scale radical land transfer albeit doing this in practice only on a small scale and at a gradual pace."[223] In the post-ESAP era, the government, on occasion, encouraged "peasants to take over white owned commercial farms," especially before "the Parliamentary elections in June, 2000."[224]

The peasants, through their support of the Chimurenga war [the liberation struggle] had installed the Mugabe government in power, and now they would be called upon once more to sustain this government in power. This rediscovery of the peasants as the

government's veritable power base, offered the most vivid evidence of the failure of the ESAP. This program not only "ate into the post-independence social contract between the government, workers and peasants," it also failed to produce "an emergent black entrepreneurial class" that would "flourish and . . . create employment."[225]

On the land question, the ESAP produced fear of destitution by increasing the economic vulnerability of the peasants. Under the ESAP, "the land rights of the rural majority poor," continued "to be eroded by elite white and black large scale land owners." These land owners saw legitimacy for "this inequity through the promise of dynamic economic growth based upon new land uses claimed to be productively superior to land uses established prior to ESAP type reforms."[226] By 2000 and beyond, it was evident that the ESAP had failed to deliver on its "promise of dynamic economic growth," and this had led to the impoverishment and disempowerment of the country.

In 1997, in reaction to "falling standards of living,... veterans of the liberation war campaigned for and were awarded pensions and lump sum payments, increasing the government budget deficits."[227] This action by the government, together with "a Pledge by President Mugabe to finally seize many white owned commercial farms" was cited by international capital as the reason for the "capital flight and currency speculation." Capital flight had a devastating impact on the country's economy, already in turmoil due to multieffects of the ESAP. Then, "the Zimbabwe dollar fell by 75 per cent on 14th November, 1997.... This currency crisis fueled inflation, spurring widespread strikes, social unrest, and rioting in the main cities."[228]

The promise of globalization and the ESAP that "the surrender of national sovereignty to 'market forces'" would "bring broad based benefits"[229] had failed to materialize in Zimbabwe. This failure to deliver on economic and social development seriously undermined the political effectiveness, and even legitimacy, of the government. In this regard it is useful to remember that "it

is extremely difficult to have an effective and legitimate state in a context of economic collapse."[230]

The Western media, governments, and even some academics have all been quick to dismiss the linkage between globalization and Zimbabwe's economic plight and political turmoil. Instead, the country's "economic crisis and political instability" has been "blamed on what" is "seen as President Robert Mugabe's autocratic and incompetent leadership."[231] Available evidence strongly demonstrates that this, and similar analyses, are simplistic and even self-serving. Specifically, "such analyses do not explain how Zimbabwe went from being an 'African success' to a 'disaster' despite retaining the same government."[232] And this government, it is worth recalling, had "for two decades after independence in 1980 ... steadily condoned an ever greater role for the private sector in Zimbabwe's development."[233] The ESAP imposed a rigid and punitive economic and political context in which the Mugabe "government's power and his decisions were repeatedly limited, conditioned and ultimately reversed by Washington."[234]

The welfare of the women of Zimbabwe was, as already outlined, affected by the multiple negative effects of the ESAP on the country's economic development. Like in other African countries, structural adjustment in reality side-stepped dealing with the fundamental causes of poverty. "It never grappled with real causes of the economic disempowerment of the mass of producers."[235] This was especially true in considering the economic plight of women. "In Zimbabwe," Veronica Brand, Roderick Mupedziswa, and Perpetua Gumbo have written, "ESAP appears not to address underlying structural issues which impede women's entry into better rewarded (not always productive) economic activities...."[236] Thus, the implementation of the ESAP had the consequence of "increasing barriers" to women's entry into high paying and economically rewarding enterprises. Further, structural adjustment hampered women's social mobility since now they "had to use their working capital to cover the rising cost of basic family needs such as food, health expenses, and school fees."[237]

Poverty, and the urgent necessity to provide for their families, drove many women to enter the informal sector. This was true of both the urban and rural areas of Zimbabwe. In the rural areas, Peter Gibbon observed that "African women appear to have had to increase their participation in fields already suffering labour supply surpluses, such as casual labour and brewing of beer for sale."[238] Overparticipation in any area of the informal sector routinely resulted in depressed earnings. This factor was particularly evident in women's participation in the informal sector in Harare.

Most of the women informal traders were engaged in "selling fruit and vegetables." On balance, this was "risky because these products are perishable." Nonetheless, the attraction here was "that there is a consistent demand for fruits and vegetables on a daily basis and hence while one cannot make a big profit, one is assured of some income, no matter how meagre it may be."[239] However, these consistent low profit levels made it virtually impossible for these women informal traders to accumulate any capital. It was hence quite unlikely that these women would emerge, under the ESAP, as Zimbabwe's captains of industry or even as owners of chunks of capital in the economy.

In spite of their meagre earnings, these women informal traders had multiple financial and social responsibilities. First, they had responsibility for "personal survival and upkeep of the family." The family ordinarily included "relatives in the rural areas." Second, and especially for "older market women," there was the added responsibility of caring for "one or more grandchildren." This type of "financial support . . . was," often "linked to the presence in the household of a daughter with her children."[240] Almost all of these women still shouldered the responsibility for household chores. These included "cooking, cleaning, gardening, look after pre-school children, and caring for the elderly, disabled and chronically ill."[241]

The women of Zimbabwe also participated in the informal sector as "cross-border traders." What does this mean? This "phe-

nomenon involves traders visiting neighbouring countries (especially Botswana, and South Africa, but also increasingly Zambia and Mozambique) and bringing back goods that may be in short supply for resale at a profit."[242] Although cross-border trading was evident in the 1980s, "the majority of the traders started their operations in the 1990s, years that coincided with the growing economic hardships mostly linked to the ESAP."[243]

In the initial stages of cross-border trading in the 1980s, these women traders were routinely maligned by the national media. Quite often, they "were portrayed as witches, allegedly insensitive to the suffering of the black majority under apartheid." Later they were portrayed as prostitutes, that they had engaged in "prostituting themselves with haulage truck drivers, and spending long periods in South Africa selling nothing but their bodies."[244] More damning, was the claim that these women traders were "unpatriotic economic saboteurs." It was loudly alleged that cross-border trading had drained "off much-needed foreign currency." Politically, this was an expedient charge to make since it deflected "criticism from politicians, government officials and elite business people who were the real foreign currency consumption culprits."[245] Also, these women traders were accused of being extensive "smugglers of all sorts of wares." This accusation led them to be "designated as criminals and distinguished from those operating legitimate, male-dominated businesses."[246] The character of these women was also attacked. Almost all of them were portrayed as "greedy and lazy"; without "needed ... skills to earn a living." It was alleged that these women most likely engaged in "illegal abortions during their 'shopping' errands."[247] A critical point to note here is that the proliferation of cross-border women traders in the 1990s effectively challenged "the traditional female role of subservience to men," especially in the acquisition of economic assets.

It was not uncommon for some of these women to travel "beyond southern Africa" in pursuit of cross-border trading. Some Zimbabwean women "traveled and traded as far afield as

Mauritius."[248] In their far-flung commercial travels, these women formed new relations that in some real functional way supplanted the traditional "kin connections." Indeed, the success of "cross-border trade depended on the existence of private individuals willing to put up strangers in their homes."[249] For their hospitality, the "hosts received money payments." In most cases however, they "were paid in kind" with "'gifts' such as food items, clothing and electronic devices."[250]

Since "the average stay for a single trip was two weeks," these women traders depended on "hired help" to care for their families. They employed other women as domestic workers. On this point, the cross-border traders "differ from other women traders in their greater reliance on the services of other women within the household to assist with cleaning, cooking and child care."[251]

Within the household, women traders came to assume greater financial responsibilities. Quite often, they assumed "the role of being the main provider, responsible for the needs of the household and the children."[252] This was true in both male- and female-headed households. In male-headed households, contributions by husbands "seldom matched either the rate of increase of salaries, or increases in the cost of living."[253] Part of the problem here was that many women in male-headed households "did not know what their husbands actually earned." For women traders, a husband's salary increasingly became a somewhat unreliable source of funds for the family upkeep. This is "one of the factors which seems to encourage women to seek out their own sources of livelihood to ensure the basic household consumption expenses are covered."[254] In most families, it is the women who became "responsible for extending household income sources."[255]

The assumption of more financial responsibilities by women within the household had a direct impact on the dynamics of marriage. This reality invariably affected "the relationship between husband and wife." This was especially true in the area of family decisions. As more and more women, "in all types of households," assumed "greater financial responsibilities, greater domestic duties,"

they also became "correspondingly responsible for a greater range of household decisions."[256] Through the rapid and relentless expansion of poverty, the ESAP had inadvertently turned the household into a dynamic "terrain of struggle." Consequently, tensions arising from painful "attempts to cope with economic hardship have actually threatened the stability of marriage."[257]

These strenuous economic and social circumstances left the women traders, and even the peasant women, with very little time "for involvement in organisations at the community/societal level."[258] For the most part, these women were exhausted after devoting very "long working hours" on "their income-generating activities and fulfillment of their household and kinship rules."[259] There was hence no evidence of active and sustained involvement in the typical broadly defined women's organizations. Rather, "most group affiliations seemed to be based on economic factors and involve some type of economic cooperation."[260]

There were, however, serious consequences for this lack of organized massive political activism at the national level in pursuit of gender equality. Perhaps the most notable of these consequences was the High Court decision in April 1999 that unanimously ruled "against a 'woman' complainant who had sued her half-brother for ownership of her deceased father's land."[261]

This ruling by Zimbabwe's High Court marked a serious legal setback for women. In essence, it nullified the principle of gender equality, thus contradicting "Zimbabwe's constitutional stipulations and liberal pledges of 'women's' equality with men."[262] On another level, this legal ruling provided evidence of definitive reassertion of undiluted patriarchy in the country. The High Court supplied the legal (and "cultural") rationale for this new reality by "arguing that 'women' leave their families after marriage, and therefore cannot use inheritance to better the lives of natal relatives."[263] In this way, rules governing inheritance would always favor men. The ideological implications of this ruling were enormous. Together with the economic and social consequences of the ESAP, this ruling seriously challenged the veracity of any

claim that the pursuit of socialism was still the foundation of the government's policy formulations.

By 2005, the ESAP still remained the painful source of Zimbabwean women's impoverishment, depressed earnings, lack of social mobility, and decline in social status. To be sure, there were groups of women who benefited from the consequences of the ESAP. Such women included "wives, female relatives, and political servants of the regime leaders, such as members of the ZANU (PF) Women's League. 'These women' have enjoyed the spill-over status, resources and life styles that accompany friendship with Zimbabwe's latest indispensables."[264] The existence of these tiny groups of women beneficiaries demonstrates two crucial points. First, the ESAP had an uneven negative impact; there are tiny groups that reaped untold benefits from structural adjustment. Second, while the majority of the women of Zimbabwe did not benefit from the ESAP, they were still expected to "absorb the social costs of adjustment." By the 1990s, and beyond, this was "becoming increasingly untenable."[265]

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A brief survey of the general impact of structural adjustment on African countries does not reveal any multiple success stories or even those countries with a decidedly promising future. After more than twenty years of rigidly enforced structural adjustment, "Africa has yet to get out of the crisis and put itself on the right path of human development."[266] Globalization and structural adjustment have been conspicuously unable to bring "the promised economic benefits ... to many in the developing world." The tantalizing theory of globalization has not led to the much-touted development and life of progress. Instead, for most of the third world, there has been stagnation or mostly regression in economic and social development. And so, "despite repeated promises of poverty reduction made over the last decade of the 20th century, the actual number of people living in poverty has actually increased...."[267] Reversal of "gains of independence" has been especially acute in Africa.

Throughout the 1990s, several UN agencies drew attention to the harmful impact of globalization on Africa. In 2004, the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) pointed out that "more than 300 million Africans still lack access to safe drinking water and 14 countries on the continent suffer from water scarcity." Under these conditions, it was therefore not surprising that "almost half of all Africans suffer from one or six main water-related diseases."[268] The commission's conclusion was that "while the global picture is far from encouraging, that of Africa is much worse," especially in the provision of water.

In its 2002 report on *Least Developed Countries* (LDCs) the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) pointed out that the majority of the world's poorest countries were in Africa. In order to arrive at this conclusion, "The UN has classified 49 countries around the world as LDCs, based on their low GDP per capita, weak human resource base and low level of economic diversification. Of that number, 33 are in sub-Saharan Africa, with most of the rest in Asia and the Pacific."[269] The details of this poverty are indeed sobering. The UNCTAD determined that "the proportion of people in 29 African LDCs living below $2 per day increased from 82 per cent in the late 1960s to 87.5 per cent in the late 1990s."[270] Even more disturbing was the number of Africans that subsisted "in extreme poverty—under $1 per day." In the period between the 1960s and 1990s, "the number of Africans living in extreme poverty in these countries rose dramatically from 89.6 million to 233.5 million."[271]

The reaction of the World Bank to these grim realities of poverty in Africa has been quite standard and predictable; as stated above, the World Bank sees the SAPs as the solution. The World Bank has also identified three additional causes of African poverty. "Over the past thirty years," E. V. K. Jaycox has written in a World Bank publication, "most of the sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) has experienced very rapid population growth, sluggish agricultural growth, and severe environmental degradation."[272]

To the World Bank, there can be no African development unless solutions are found to these three key problems.

Its recommendations have called for "smaller families ... farmer demand for 'sustainable' agricultural technology; agricultural services and education serve women, in order to stimulate reduced demand for children; environmental action plans to focus on agricultural and population causes of environmental degradation."[273] These recommendations do not, however, address the cardinal problem: the historical exploitative relationship between the West and Africa, and how exercise of this relationship prohibits Africa from undertaking and then achieving sustainable development.

What is increasingly apparent is that no real sustainable development can issue from this exploitative relationship. Indeed, as George J. S. Dei has critically observed, "we all have to seriously question how much improvements we can honestly expect in the lives and living conditions of African rural peoples if the approach to 'sustainable development' is pursued within existing conventional development paradigm."[274] This refers to paradigms that efficiently and systematically reinforce the status quo; the exploitative relationship. These are "development paradigms that continually create dependency, strengthen unequal dependency relations between nations, and also further reinforce and maximize the system of control, exploitation, injustice and inequality within and among societies."[275]

In spite of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, the World Bank and the IMF have maintained, with stubborn regularity, that globalization is a success; that globalization is the only way forward for the world economy. Nicholas Stern, senior vice-president and chief economist of the World Bank has, for example, observed that "whereas twenty years ago most exports from developing countries were of primary commodities, now manufacturers and services predominate. This successful integration," he continued, "has generally supported poverty reduction."[276]

On the general social and economic impact of globalization, the World Bank has maintained that "globalization generally reduces poverty because more integrated economies tend to grow faster and this growth is usually diffused."[277] The World Bank's overall assessment therefore is that "between countries, globalization is now mostly reducing inequality."[278] As for the environment, the World Bank holds the view that "in key areas environmental standards are actually rising."[279]

This upbeat and positive assessment of the impact of globalization has nonetheless been unable to hide its glaring failures. The World Bank has therefore been forced to acknowledge that "one of the most disturbing global trends of the past two decades is that countries with about 2 billion people are in danger of becoming marginal to the world economy. Incomes in these countries have been falling, poverty has been rising, and they participate less in trade today than they did 20 years ago."[280] These 2 billion people constitute what the World Bank refers to as "losers from globalization." As it happens, most of these people are in "Africa and the former Soviet Union." The participation of countries from these areas in "integration or globalization" has clearly not reduced poverty. What we have here instead is impoverishment through participation; the paradox of marginalization through integration.

How about the future? Neither the World Bank nor theorists of globalization have been able to convincingly demonstrate how the "losers from globalization," and others can overcome current well-entrenched impediments to their development under globalization. How will these peoples and their countries overcome existing advantages enjoyed by the West in world trade? The World Bank has theorized that the answer lies in "these countries" diversifying "their exports by breaking into markets for manufactured goods and services where possible."[281] On balance, this is not a realistic proposition. In this regard, it is worth noting that the World Bank has itself concluded that under globalization "some countries are indeed badly located and will simply not industrialize."[282] Such countries will "have missed the boat" forever.

The experience of African countries under the regime of Structural Adjustment Programs repeatedly shows that adoption of structural adjustment does not, in itself, guarantee development or reduction in poverty. As Joseph E. Stiglitz has pointed out, "even countries that have abandoned African socialism managed to install reasonably honest governments, balanced their budgets, and kept inflation down find that they cannot attract private investors."[283] Thus, an enthusiastic embrace of globalization together with strict implementation of recommendations by the World Bank and the IMF are not enough to launch a country toward growth and prosperity.

Under globalization, prospects for development for those countries that "have missed the boat" are not at all encouraging. These countries, according to the World Bank, "are so disadvantaged by location that they probably have little prospect of developing." For them, "continued marginalization will be the harsh reality."[284] These countries are condemned to a state of permanent poverty and marginalization; to be continually studied, analyzed, and categorized.

This international political economy, "in which undemocratic institutions systematically generate economic inequality," is now correctly referred to as "global apartheid." What does this mean? Salih Booker and William Minter describe global apartheid as "an international system of minority rule whose attributes include: differential access to basic human rights; wealth and power structured by race and place; structural racism, embedded in global economic processes, political institutions and cultural assumptions; and the international practice of double standards that assume inferior rights to be appropriate for certain 'others' defined by location, origin, race or gender."[285] Global apartheid reinforces and expands the gulf between "the winners" and "the losers." This system is by design and operation, nondemocratic. Its key institutions, the World Bank and the IMF, "are not representative of the nations they serve." Indeed, the leaders of these institutions, "are chosen behind closed doors, and it has never

been viewed as a prerequisite that the head should have any experience in the developing world."[286]

Within most of the third world countries, global apartheid thrives by providing "rewards for elites that respond to external pressures more than to the demands of their own people." This system, "like apartheid in South Africa," is rigid, oppressive and intolerant to alternative democratic solutions. "It relies on the assumption that it is 'natural' for different population groups to have different expectations of life."[287] It is, therefore, not surprising that economic and social "inequality rose sharply" in all those countries under structural adjustment.

A phenomenal expansion of unemployment has been a major contributory factor in this sharp rise in social and economic inequality. Economic policies resulting from structural adjustment "killed formal sector jobs" and even private sector jobs without providing alternative employment or occupation. Without "a safety net of unemployment insurance," a feature now almost standard in the West, the unemployed and their families and other dependents quickly fell into the ranks of the impoverished. Socially, this development led to "urban violence, increased crime and political unrest."[288]

All of these factors had a direct impact on the welfare of women, especially their economic survival, political empowerment, and social advancement. Also affected was the "quality of life" that women and their families endured under structural adjustment. "There is convincing documentation," Patrick Bond has pointed out, "that women and vulnerable children, the elderly and disabled people are the main victims of debt repayment pressure, as they are expected to survive with less social subsidy, with more pressure on the fabric of the family during economic crisis, and with HIV/AIDS closely correlated to structural adjustment."[289]

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